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THE STORY OF A SOLDIER'S LIFE

BY

FIELD-MARSHAL VISCOUNT WOLSELEY

O.M., K.P., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., D.C.L., LL.D

WITH PHOTOGRAVURE PORTRAIT AND PLANS

SECOND IMPRESSION

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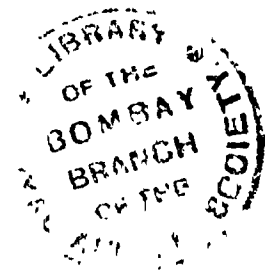
VOLUME I



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PREFACE

In the following pages I have tried to record the noble actions I have witnessed, and to describe the men I have been associated with. I have set down nought in malice; and therefore beg my readers to forgive what may be my prejudices.

WOLSELEY, F.M.

Farm House
Glynde
September 14, 1903

TO

THE RT. HONOURABLE

LORD MOUNT-STEPHEN.

I DEDICATE THESE VOLUMES OF VARIED EXPERIENCES

TO YOU WHO FOR FORTY YEARS HAVE

GIVEN ME YOUR UNVARYING

FRIENDSHIP.

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Field-Marshal Viscount Wolseley, G.C.M.G. . *Frontispiece*

CHAPTER I

Early Years—Join at Chatham—Voyage to India 1833–52

I WAS reared in the belief that my family was one of the very few that could trace its direct descent in the male line from ancestors who had lived before "the Conquest" on lands still held by us, their descendants. According to an unwritten legend, accepted of course by us as gospel, we were given those lands—which subsequently became the Manor of Ousley, then Wlslia, and now Wolseley—by King Edgar for exterminating the wolves on Cannock Chase. The truth of this legend is strengthened by the fact that from time immemorial we have borne on our arms the Talbot Dog—the wolfhound of the Saxons—and that the wolf's head has always been our crest, and *Homo homini lupus* our motto.

A man's ancestors, like his children, though interesting personalities to himself, have no charm for others. My reader will, therefore, be glad to know that I have no intention of writing a family history. I have only mentioned this much on the subject because the fact of knowing that I had inherited a very old name had a marked influence upon my boyhood and early life. It was a spur to the boundless ambition that filled my brain in youth, and it has been an active factor in the events of my subsequent career.

Leaving my forefathers to their long sleep in Colwich churchyard, I come to my immediate progenitors. My great-grandfather, Colonel Sir Richard Wolseley, Bart., the younger brother of Sir Charles Wolseley, Bart., of Wolseley, Stafford, went to Ireland about the beginning of George II's reign. I believe he was induced to do so by the hope of being able to make good a claim to the confiscated Irish lands which had been allotted and partly made over to his uncle, Brigadier-General the Right Hon. William Wolseley, by King William III, for services rendered during that monarch's wars in Ireland. He had gone with General Percy Kirke to Ireland in 1689, had raised some troops in Inniskillen, his own regiment—levied there—being called "Wolseley's Horse."[1] He saw much service at that time in Ireland, having commanded at the hard-fought battle of Newtown-Butler, and subsequently defeated the Duke of Berwick at Cavan. He took part in the Duke of Schomberg's disastrous campaign of 1689, and fought at the Boyne. He was all through the operations by which King William effected the subjugation of Ireland, dying in Dublin in 1697 as Master-General of the Ordnance and one of the Lords Justices then ruling that turbulent island. I do not mean to describe here the events of his life, but he was a remarkable man, and had served King William well. He crossed the Boyne at that monarch's side, and according to family tradition, when William's horse was bogged in the river, as history relates, he dismounted and gave the king his horse, which was a black one. The pictures, which usually represent the king riding a white charger when crossing that river, must be inaccurate if our family legend be true. However, our

[1] This regiment is now the 6th or Inniskilling Dragoons.

Brigadier always considered himself very badly used by the King, for whilst all his Dutch generals and other personal friends were given large grants, mostly of Irish lands robbed from the Catholic Irish gentry, the land grant promised, and at one time allotted, to the English Brigadier of Horse was never legally made over to him. I believe, however, that some of the lands in Carlow and Wexford, which my great-grandfather subsequently obtained in Ireland, were part of those originally intended for, or given to, this fighting uncle of his.

Shortly after my great-grandfather's arrival in Ireland, he was made an Irish baronet, and he married a daughter of Sir Thomas Molyneux, Bart. He settled in the county of Carlow, at the village of Tullow, where he built a house, and, following the fashion of the Irish families around him, called it "Mount Wolseley." There my grandfather and his two brothers were born, the first of the family entitled to wear the shamrock on St. Patrick's Day. My grandfather and both his brothers were in the Royal Dragoons, in which regiment he served throughout the Seven Years' War in Germany. As a child I took the deepest interest in the stories I was told of his gallant deeds, and remember how much impressed I was by the fact that upon one occasion he had not changed his clothes for a fortnight, at the end of which his big jack-boots had to be cut from his swollen feet.

Upon the close of the war he returned home with his regiment, and when marching through Wiltshire he met a pretty Miss Hulbert, fell in love, and married her. She was the orphan daughter of a Huguenot father, who had settled in the west of England as a cloth manufacturer. Her fortune was small, but her fecundity was prodigious. Alas!

she presented my impetuous grandfather with fifteen children.

A very good man, but not wise in worldly affairs, he soon awoke to the imprudence of his marriage. He, a younger son, could no longer afford to amuse himself as a captain of Dragoons, but must find some other settled and less expensive occupation. An uncle by marriage, Dr. Garnet, Bishop of Clogher, had settled in Ireland to become a prelate in the Irish Church. He now offered my grandfather an Irish living if he would enter the Church, and the offer was accepted. This change of title from captain to reverend was not difficult, as when young he had taken a degree in Trinity College, Dublin. He died in 1800 as Rector of Tullycorbet in the north of Ireland.

In honour of the bishop my father was called Garnet, and in due time I was also given that name " at my baptism."

During the rebellion of 1798, our house at Tullow was attacked and burned by the Irish. In some amusing letters to her people in England, my grandmother describes the sudden approach of the rebels and the panic which ensued, for they seemed bent upon ridding Ireland of at least one family of the hated Saxon settlers. Every one ran, some on horseback, others in any wheeled conveyance they could secure, all making for Carlow, about nine miles off, where there was a small English garrison. A very plain aunt, to whom as a boy I was much attached, was forgotten in the hurry and confusion. Finding herself left behind she set out on foot, but being soon overtaken by a Yeomanry trooper, he kindly took her up behind him. She did very well thus until about half-way to Carlow, when, unfortunately for her, they overtook a very pretty girl out of breath and much frightened. The trooper said

she was his cousin, and insisted upon my ugly aunt giving up her place behind him to his handsome kinswoman. My poor aunt had to finish her flight on foot.

The rebels were not content with burning our house, but, being short of ammunition, they stripped the Church spire of its lead, and also smelted into bullets the leaden coffin in which my great-grandfather had been recently buried.

My father and his younger brother entered the Army. Both served for many years in the King's Own Borderers, then quartered in the West Indies. When other regiments were engaged in winning fame under Wellington in Spain theirs was left to fight the French in Martinique, Guadeloupe, and other French West India Islands. I remember many a story about these encounters with the French, but will not inflict them upon my reader. The life led by our troops in the West Indies then was odious in every sense, and my father hated it. The officers, as well as the men, drank hard and often quarrelled over their wine. Duels were common occurrences, but, strange to say, they seldom ended fatally. When either my father or uncle was so "engaged in the morning," and it was often, one was always the other's second.

My father was by no means clever, and having entered the Army when extremely young, he was badly educated, a misfortune he never ceased to deplore. I often heard my mother say that my father spent his fourteenth birthday as an ensign in Gibraltar. He was very poor and very proud. Nothing could have induced him to do a mean action of any sort. Hot-tempered, and perhaps prone to quarrel, he was chivalry itself in thought, word and action. Full of charity, he felt much for the Irish poor, with whose misery, in those days of high rents and high prices, he had

the most real sympathy. Very punctilious in manner and bearing, and particular about his clothes and general appearance, he looked a soldier all over. He was a very religious man in later years, and a strong Protestant, as all the family had been since the Reformation, until his cousin, the English Baronet, Sir Charles Wolseley—the curious, clever, half-cracked Chartist, who had taken part in the assault of the Bastile—joined the Church of Rome.

My father married late in life, my mother being twenty-five years his junior. She was the daughter of William Smith, Esq., of Golden Bridge House, County Dublin, and another daughter married my father's cousin, Sir Richard Wolseley, Bart. My maternal grandfather was a typical spendthrift Irish landlord, who lived recklessly beyond his means. His great-grandfather, a Mr. de Herries, had fled from England during the plague in Charles II's reign, and, having bought the Golden Bridge property, built himself a house upon it. Why he assumed the homely name of Smith, I know not. Most of us have acquaintances who have sunk the patronymic "Smith" into what sounded more imposing. But here was a well-born old gentleman who deliberately did the reverse.

My father sold out as a major, shortly after his marriage, and rented Golden Bridge House from his father-in-law, who had settled in England. There I was born, June 4, 1833, just 101 years after my paternal grandfather had come into the world at Mount Wolseley, in the County of Carlow. I was thus the third generation that had been born in Ireland. It is always pleasant to me to remember that the year of my birth was that in which we abolished "that execrable sum of all villanies, commonly called the 'Slave Trade.'"

Golden Bridge House was a red brick mansion of the

King William or early Queen Anne period. Like most of the old country houses near Dublin, it is now a convent, and a dirty slum has grown up in and around what was once its undulating and well-watered little park.

I should like to record here my earliest recollections of my mother, but it is not easy to describe one so loved, and round whose memory there clings, as a halo, the holiest and loftiest of my childish thoughts and aspirations. As a boy I always thought hers the fairest and sweetest face in the world, and she still looms before my memory a beautiful, gracious, tall and stately woman, full of love and tenderness for all about her. Her smile was most fascinating, and the poor and sorrowful of heart never came to her in vain for help and sympathy. Her white, well-shaped teeth, very regular features, dark, nearly black, hair, and an almost southern complexion, made her more Spanish than English in appearance. She was very clever, capable, tactful, of sound judgment, and as a girl had read much. In my daily walks with her, when a boy, I drank in from her teaching much that I have never forgotten. Her religion—devoid of everything approaching to priest-craft—was the simplest Bible form of worship. She was indeed one of the pure in heart, of whom, we are told, "they shall see God."

I will pass rapidly over the story of my boyhood, for I know by the memoirs of others how uninteresting are the tales of early youth. As a boy, I was very active, ran and jumped well, was fond of boxing, single-stick, rowing, shooting, and all out-of-door amusements. I read much, and crammed my head with Hume's *History of England*, Alison's *History of Europe*, and Napier's *Peninsula War*. Devoted to mathematics, I disliked the "Classics," especi-

ally Greek, and always loathed the ancient gods of Greece, and all the absurd myths and stories about them. My exact and mathematical mind revolted against the unreal nonsense taught me as the history of these mean and contemptible deities, about most of whom there was nothing good, wholesome, or manly. Horace and Juvenal, however, amused, and Virgil's description of the games excited me. Later on I read Caesar for my Army examination; his commentaries and *Xenophon's Anabasis* were the only classics I ever thoroughly enjoyed. I was taught drawing, the use of the pocket sextant and prismatic compass, and I devoured every work on the theory and practice of war that I could beg, borrow, or afford to buy.

My first Commission was dated March 12, 1852, when I was still under nineteen years of age, and I joined the provisional battalion at Chatham early in June, as an ensign in the 80th, now called by its old official title, the South Staffordshire Regiment. This Chatham battalion consisted of the depôts of all the Queen's regiments serving in India, and when I joined it, the barracks were overcrowded with boy recruits, chiefly obtained from Ireland, and of ensigns of all ages waiting for conveyance to India. All drafts for Indian regiments then went round the Cape of Good Hope in sailing ships, most of which belonged to the firms of either Green or Wygram, the two great shipowners then trading with the East. Most of us young ensigns, knowing we had but a very short time longer to be in England, and might not return for many long years, embarked in all the follies, reckless pleasures and so-called amusements our limited means could provide. Want of money saved many of us, for nine out of ten of us were very poor, and looked forward to an Indian career where high

pay enabled the infantry officer to live without assistance from home.

Like all other ensigns, I was allotted one very small room as my quarters. It had the usual barrack table and two chairs; the rest of the furniture, as is usual in all barracks, I had to find myself. These officers' quarters were very old and abominably bad. An old great-uncle of mine told me he had towards the end of the previous century occupied a room in the house where I was lodged. It was, he said, even then generally understood that these quarters were so bad that they had been condemned as unfit for use. But throughout most of my service it would seem to have been generally assumed that any house was good enough for our officers. It was then a common belief that the barrack master and his old sergeants made a good thing out of the charges levied upon young officers as barrack damages. A cracked pane of glass was a small silver mine to these men. Fifty ensigns may have occupied the quarter with this cracked pane in it, and all had to pay for a new one. After I had embarked, the barrack sergeant presented me with his bill, one item being for a latch key, which I had then about me. In my innocence I proffered the key, and asked him to erase the item. He positively refused; I paid the several shillings demanded, its outside value being, I should say, one, and foolishly imagined I had scored one against the harpy by throwing the key into the river.

This provisional battalion was then commanded by a colonel with rough, bad manners, and very much disliked by all, old and young, who had the misfortune to serve under him. But his task was a hard one I fully admit, and I can now make allowance for his bad temper, though not for his

brutality of manner. I was only about ten days or a fortnight at Chatham before embarkation for India, so I had personally little to do with him, but I found him, whenever I did have to approach him, wanting in all that kindness and consideration which marks a gentleman in dealing with boys of eighteen or nineteen. None of us were, I should say, over that age, and a little advice given in a fatherly tone would have had great influence with most of us. I confess we were an uninteresting lot. The great bulk of the young men who then usually went to India were socially not of a high order. Of course, though very poor, many were the sons of old officers of good families, whose poverty compelled their sons to serve in India, if serve they would in the Army. But the great bulk of those I met at Chatham, and afterwards in India and Burmah, at that time, struck me, I remember, as wanting in good breeding, and all seemed badly educated. For many and many a year this depôt had been similarly emptied each summer of its beardless ensigns to fill up the annual vacancies in the Queen's regiments serving in India. It was curious and interesting, though sad, to follow their military careers. They were the class of men who, for the previous half century, had led the soldiers of the English Army in all the Indian battles from the days of Arthur Wellesley to those of Colin Campbell. I need scarcely add that it was upon the British regiments the brunt of the fighting fell in all the Indian wars of that period.

It is sad to think of the many who, from want of energy and of grit, and above all things of that healthy ambition which requires those qualities for its foundation, sank beneath the enervating influences of cantonment life. Some degenerated quickly into mere consumers of beer and

brandy, without even that British recklessness which in a measure makes the sportsman. Others, in pursuit of game and adventure, found vent for their superabundant activity by wanderings into unknown jungles, and amidst snowy mountains. Amongst these latter many became our best and most daring and most resourceful soldiers. Their sporting tastes but added to their keen sense of regimental duties. Of these a small proportion, taking their profession seriously, studied hard at all military sciences, and spent many of those deadly midday hours of the Indian summers in reading military history and the lives of great commanders. Happy, indeed, is the young officer who so loves his work as to find in such literature a high form of pleasure. A few of that stamp developed into able leaders, but they were men who would have achieved greatness in any walk of life. However, as I look back at my early contemporaries, and class them with hundreds of other young officers, both before and after them, I feel a pride in thinking and knowing that one and all, good and bad together, did England righteous service. Whenever the occasion required it, they fought hard for her honour, and in her interests led their men straight in siege and battle. Although all did not put out their talents to good interest, they loved their country, and never shrank from death when her interests required them to face it.

At the Pongo Mess, as it was commonly called, I know not why, the captains—they were looked upon as elderly persons by us boys—sat at the end of the table furthest from the door, so as to drink their port and sherry as far removed as possible from the noisy ensigns who thronged the lower end. They seldom spoke to us, and we looked upon them with feelings approaching awe. This was entirely different

from the practice of all regimental messes, but at Chatham we were nobody's children, and no one took any trouble with us. There was none of the controlling influence over us that the seniors in all regiments exercise over their young brother officers, for at that depôt mess no comradeship existed. With one whom I met there, Pemberton of the Royal Rifles, now a retired general, I have kept up a close and a happy intimacy during life. He is now one of my oldest and best friends. A gallant soldier, a generous and affectionate comrade, without guile, simple and honest in heart, he is a gentleman in thought, word and deed. May his days be long.

The older officers interested me much, for a large number wore medals, won in Indian campaigns, each and all of which had pushed our frontier further north towards the great mountains, the natural boundaries of Hindostan. One of these officers still wore his arm in a sling from a bad wound received at Chillianwallah, that unfortunate battle where British courage was a more distinguishing feature than either the strategical or tactical ability of the general commanding. This disabled officer told me that on the evening of that battle the dead bodies of thirteen of his brother officers lay on the dining table in their mess tent. Well, although "some one blundered," those men died like gentlemen, and I remember well how much more I was inspired with fighting ardour than depressed by this story. There was an heroic grandeur about it that recalled to memory my badly learned stories of fights before Troy. I was barbarian enough to feel more enthusiastic over this wounded officer's matter-of-fact narrative than I ever felt when poring over Homer's heroic verse, trying to learn, and doing my best to appreciate it. I confess that this

Englishman, with his arm in a sling, was to me a far greater hero than either Hector or Achilles. But from boyhood to this day, I have always had the poorest opinions of Homer's heroes as fighting men. My servant, Private Andrews, of I Company 90th Light Infantry, was 'in every way worth a dozen of them, though he never found a great poet to record his deeds. But he died for his country.

The relation of all actual deeds of daring has always had for me an intense interest. As a boy they made my pulse throb quickly when I read them in *Peter Parley's Annual,* and they excite me still in no small degree. I always loved to hear old soldiers talk about their daring comrades in long forgotten fights. I still remember many of their exciting stories. Here is one about Meeanee, the battle fought by Sir Charles Napier, which gave us the province of Scind. It may be truthfully said that it was won by the 22nd, now known by its older title of the Cheshire Regiment. It was the only British regiment present. Its colonel was then a fighting gentleman from Tipperary, a man of the old school, who knew little of strategy, and whose tactics consisted in going straight for his enemy to knock him down. He was afterwards well known at Aldershot as Sir John Pennyfather, "the swearing general." The day after he assumed command at Aldershot, an officer quartered there was asked in a London club if Sir John had yet appeared there. The reply was: "Yes, he swore himself in yesterday." He seldom expressed any decided opinion without the accompaniment of an oath, although the real kindness of his disposition—well known to his soldiers—was on a par with his daring courage. His regiment was his home, and all ranks in it were to him his children. It had lost heavily in the battle, and as he

looked upon its thinned ranks that evening, he fairly broke down. Intensely proud of what they had done that day, and with tears coursing down his cheeks, he said to them : "I can't make you a speech, my lads, but by ———, you are all gentlemen."

Never, I believe, in classical or in modern times, has a more effective speech been made by a leader to his men after a battle. It was just the praise they valued most, for they believed it to be the highest compliment any man could pay them. They felt it; they were proud of it. Unpremeditated, it went straight from the colonel's feeling heart to the hearts of the gallant soldiers he commanded.

At the time I write of, all the troopships and most of the East-Indiamen sailed from Sheerness. During the last week of June, 1852, I embarked in the *Maidstone*, a full-rigged ship of between 800 and 900 tons, quite a respectable sized vessel in those days. She belonged to the Wygram Company of shipowners, the rival of the still greater company of Green and Co. Captain Peter Roe commanded her, an experienced and able sailor, and socially a very superior man in all respects. He kept up the reputation of the old class of vessels known as East-Indiamen, a class then fast disappearing, and entirely unknown to the present generation. His officers were men of good manners, and the ship's crew were all good British sailors, except the boatswain, a first-rate man all round, who was either a Dane or a Swede, I forget which. The carpenter was a character—a Highlander—who knew the history of Scotland well, and who could have passed with credit an examination in Sir Walter Scott's novels. He might have been the original "Chips" of Captain Marryat's manly stories.

The anchor weighed; we were towed down the river until

our sails could be of use, and we were under all sail before nightfall. We made good weather throughout the following day, and I can well remember my thoughts and feelings as I gazed earnestly upon the green fields and white cliffs of dear old England, not knowing whether I should ever see them again, or at least when I might do so. How I thought of my mother, all through life my first care. Poets imagine that men say to themselves the night after a battle: "What will they say in England?" I believe that by far the largest proportion of men think of their mother, and of her valued love for them. At least so it has been all through my life. But then I had the best and dearest of mothers; happily, most men think that also.

I had never been a good sailor, so I kept my hammock, or rather swinging cot, for a couple of days, and then struggled on deck. It was my apprenticeship to the sea, and I have scarcely ever been seasick since. In those days, all passengers had to furnish their own cabins. I had another ensign as my cabin companion, Mr. Grahame, 22nd Regiment, whose younger brother subsequently joined what I have always called "My Regiment," the 90th Light Infantry, as it was the only one with whose head quarters I ever did duty. He spoke with a Scotch accent, and had all the proverbial qualities of his race. His brother, who was killed at the Alum Bagh, was one of the very bravest men I ever knew: I shall refer to him later on. Our cabin was spacious enough, with a large square port-hole, which in ordinary weather, when we were on the lee side, we were usually able to keep wide open. The first warning we generally had of bad weather coming on was the appearance of the fine old Scotch carpenter to screw up this port. When so fastened down in the tropics the

cabin became unbearable, and I for one could not sleep below, for the cockroaches flying about and settling at times on nose or face made me bound out of my cot to hurry up into the delightful air and quiet of a night at sea when near the Line.

We had on board about 150 soldiers, and some women and children belonging to them... There were a few old sergeants and a small number of old privates who, having been invalided from India and restored to health at home, were returning—without any doubt to die with their regiments in the Bengal Presidency. The man allotted to me as a servant was one of these. He was an Irishman of the 10th Foot, and upon my asking him why he had been sent home, said he was invalided from Die-sentary. I said inquiringly, "from where?" He repeated that he had nearly died from Die-sentary in India. His meaning then dawned upon me, and I realized how much accentuation had to do with our language. How difficult it must be for a foreigner to understand us, when a misplaced accent in our pronunciation of a well-known disease renders its meaning unintelligible amongst ourselves.

Our commanding officer on board was a tiny little man, an old lieutenant in the Lincolnshire Regiment, who had taken part in the Sutlej campaign of 1846. At the head of that regiment was an Irishman named Franks—well known in the Army then as a terrible martinet—who was hated by all ranks under him. No officer in the regiment would accept the position of adjutant, so harsh was he even to his officers. A lieutenant was at last found in another regiment who was willing to accept it, namely young Henry Havelock, the most daring of men in action and full of military ability. He often told me stories about the strange

colonel he had then to serve with—a man as rigorous and uncompromising towards his officers as he was in all his dealings with the rank and file. Just before the battalion moved into action the day of Sobraon, the colonel said to his men: "I understand you mean to shoot me to-day, but I want you to do me a favour; don't kill me until the battle is well over." It was quite true; they had meant to shoot him, but the coolness with which the request was made, the soldier-like spirit and indifference to death it denoted, the daring and contempt for danger he displayed throughout the battle, so won their admiration that they allowed him to live. But history tells us he never reformed.

Life on board an East-Indiaman, before steamers went round the Cape, or a railway had been made across the Isthmus of Suez, has been often told by more graphic pens than mine. It was a wearisome monotony usually spent, I think it is Macaulay who says so, in making love and in quarrelling. Our doctor was a Hercules in strength, and a sad story was told of him which, in its main features was, I believe, true. He, with his wife and child, were upset from a boat in some river; he took one under each arm, and swam vigorously for shore. Becoming exhausted, he had to drop his child to save his wife, whom he brought safely to land.

We had but few books, and they were of little count, but it was amusing to watch the idiosyncrasies and study the characters of those around one. The captain held himself very much aloof from all of us, but if I had had to pick out the man who had most in him and was made of the best stuff, I should have selected him. There seemed to be so much reserve force about him that he was a problem

to me, little as ever he deigned to say to me during the voyage. However, I was very independent of others, for I pored over a Hindostani grammar and phrase book, and without any Moonshee to guide me, tried to read fables and little stories in what was then known in India as "the vernacular." This with drawing, keeping an elaborate journal, and revelling in the few military works I possessed, enabled me to get through the long days of sunlight more easily, I think, than my companions. I roamed about the yards and upper rigging, the main top in fair weather being a favourite reading place. I have sat there for hours with a book in my hands, and many were the visits I paid to the main truck. The most trying thing for the nerves, however, was to go out along the bowsprit and then back on board, hand-over-hand along the bobstay under the dolphin-striker.

This running about the rigging supplied me with the bodily exercise that is so necessary for muscular vigour, and was an outlet for my pent-up energy, which, on board ship, required a safety-valve to prevent an explosion. When approaching squalls led to the order, "all hands," or even "watch shorten sail," I usually took my place with the reefers on the mizzen-top-sail-yard, and enjoyed the fun and excitement immensely. To lean far over the yard and pick up the reef points whilst the luffed sail flapped violently about your legs with the seeming object of striking your feet from the rope you stood on, was pleasantly exciting. But though I was the only passenger who thus amused himself, the daily occupations of all were more muscular than mental.

We sighted Madeira and some small islands and rocks during our voyage to the Cape, all of which I sketched. Their outlines with a bright sky above and a very blue sea

beneath gave us something to talk about, and provided me with objects for my sketch book.

We had some of the amusing ceremonies then usual when crossing the Line, but in a modified form, for I believe there was a rule against their being played at on board troopships with all their old-fashioned formalities. The week or fortnight during which sailing-ships were usually becalmed in the neighbourhood was then about the most tedious and temper-trying period of a voyage to India. For hours, sometimes for days, your vessel drifted about, with flapping sails, and not enough wind to enable you to keep your course. The rubbish thrown overboard from the ship's galley after breakfast floated about your taffrail all day, and you were lucky if you did not see it still there next morning. There were generally at this season of the year other Eastern-bound ships in sight in those latitudes. Sailors never liked to get their vessels too close then, for on this calm and, as it were, painted sea, when they approached very near one another, they were apt to close in, being drawn together by the affinity which bodies of loose matter have one for the other when no counteracting force is there to keep them apart. We often signalled to other ships situated as we were, but we never communicated by boat, as we were told was not an uncommon practice under like circumstances in those latitudes. Sometimes boats were had out, I understood, to tow the becalmed ships, but we patiently awaited the very light winds which every now and then enabled us to keep steerage way on the good ship. Shark catching afforded us occupation and subject for conversation, but altogether it was a dull time, and taking us all in all, we were a dull, uninteresting lot on board the old *Maidstone*.

The one ardent hope that cheered me through the long monotonous days spent amidst uncongenial companions on board this ship was that I might reach Burmah in time to see some active service there. I thought then, I think still, that this was a manly, elevating aspiration, for surely war with all its horrors exercises a healthy influence on all classes of society. There is an epoch in the history of nations when man becomes so absorbed in the pursuit of wealth and the enjoyment of ease, that the drastic medicine of war can alone revive its former manliness and restore the virility that had made its sons renowned. Storms, we are told, drive away noxious vapours injurious to bodily health. War may cause havoc, but the ruins of Thebes, of Carthage, of Greece and of Rome, remind us that unmanly vices killed the races which built these once famous and powerful cities. It is man's wrong-doing, not his desire for glory, which destroys his efforts to be great. Conquering races may be inferior as poets, artists and writers to those they subdue, but the latter would not have been subdued had they retained the manly virtues that made their forebears great. National greatness can only continue to thrive whilst it has fighting strength for its foundation. War, though it may mean a hard struggle for national existence, is the greatest purifier to the race or nation that has reached the verge of over-refinement, of excessive civilization. That verge is the edge of a precipice at whose base lie millions in every form and phase of mental and bodily decrepitude.

A favourable voyage of fifty days, devoid of all striking incidents, found us at last anchored in Table Bay, the port of Cape Town. That capital of our South African Colonies was then a very small but most picturesque place, compared with the very dusty smoky city of to-day. We

sailed into the bay in the early morning when the view was both striking and delightful. The now overbuilt hill, known as the Lion's Rump, was richly green, some few villas scattered over it, whilst the town itself was brilliantly lit up with the rays of the morning sun. Between it and the base of the steep and rocky Table Mountain behind, was a rich belt of trees into which seemed to run all the main streets leading up from the sea. The Bay faces the north-west, and as the worst wind blows from that quarter, no year then passed without some ships being driven ashore. The consequence was, that on the beach at the south-eastern end of the Bay, we saw the remains of what were once noble ships, that, having dragged their anchors or parted their cables, had been wrecked there at various times. We came in for one of these hurricanes, as I shall describe a little further on.

We had no sooner anchored than the ship was surrounded with boats manned by Malays, and laden with fruits of many kinds.

Trips to Wineburg and places in the neighbourhood were now the order of the day. I pitied the poor rank and file, in whom, at that period, sufficient trust was not placed to be allowed ashore. Even now, I may say in parenthesis, if the old school were allowed their way, they would receive very much the same treatment. We were asked out, and whether it was from being so long on board ship, or that the Dutch girls at the Cape were pretty, we found them very pleasant and attractive. A short time after our arrival, when it was my day of duty on board ship, the signal was made from shore to look out for a nor'-wester. The wind grew rapidly higher and higher, and the sea came rolling in with great violence. Some of the smaller craft drifted

past us towards the fatal beach at the upper end of the Bay, where several went ashore. All the big ships, riding with double anchors, had already paid out most of their cables when the signal was made to us from Fort Amsterdam, "prepare to land troops; boats will be sent." All the men at once paraded on deck, and I was told off to take charge of the first boatload. A very fine and capacious sort of open yawl was soon alongside, into which about thirty men or more were packed as best we could. It was a matter of serious danger in such a sea to get from our ship on board this large cargo boat. We shoved off, but the sea was too much for us, although my boyish yachting experience told me how admirably she was handled by her Dutch crew. Every moment I thought she must go over, so much so that I kept my hands on the buckle of my sword belt, ready to cast it off the moment she did so. Reason told me I could do very little to save myself in such a sea, but I was at any rate determined to make a fight with it for my life. The skipper struggled hard to make the shore, but at last gave it up. He said the wind and sea had risen so much since he had left the landing place that even if we had succeeded in making it the men could not have been landed. We accordingly headed back to the ship, and were mostly slung on board. I was much struck with the quiet manner in which the young soldiers behaved, obeying with alacrity all orders given to them.

Having stayed about ten days at the Cape, we set sail for Calcutta, sighting the little islands of St. Paul's and Amsterdam in the very stormy seas of that far-off parallel of southern latitude. In those days all ships bound for the Bay of Bengal followed the western trades as far as those islands, and making "a new departure" from them,

turned northwards towards the mouth of the sacred Ganges. Before the end of October, we had sighted the low-lying mudbanks near the mouth of the river Hooghley. We anchored more than once, after taking a pilot on board at the "Sand Heads," and successfully passed the very dangerous reach of the river, known as the "James and Mary."

As we neared Calcutta we heard minute guns being fired from Fort William, and wondered and asked one another for whom they could be. I can remember as it might have been yesterday the shock, the thrill, I experienced—I am sure those around me felt it also—when a voice from the first boat alongside cried out, "The Duke of Wellington is dead." As we had speculated upon whom it could be who had passed away, strange to say, the great Duke's name had occurred to none. From earliest childhood we had been so accustomed to hear him referred to as the greatest of living men, that my generation had grown up to regard him as an Immortal, and as a national institution. Every voice was hushed, and in a moment all was silence on deck. Had we been told a king was dead, we should in duty bound have cried, "*Vive le Roi.*" But where was another Wellington to be found? There were many kings and heirs-apparent, but the world possessed only one "Iron Duke," the great conqueror of Napoleon, who had at Waterloo freed many prostrate nations, and restored peace to an exhausted Europe.

England's mainstay had parted, and the nation had so much forgotten how long its noble purpose had been fulfilled, that when the catastrophe came it was unexpected. It seemed for the time to be a knock-me-down blow past all recovery. Our national influence abroad, as well as our security at home, was felt to be no longer what it had been

whilst our great captain and pilot lived. There was no one who could take his place in the Councils of our Sovereign. She had lost her most valued friend, the strongest support of her throne, the statesman, honest, truthful, and frank as he was wise, to whom she could at all times turn for advice with the fullest confidence. Wellington was dead. And all on that deck who heard the news as it was called out, felt that England was no longer what she had been.

We have since had many able ministers, devoted to their country's interest, and also a host of self-called statesmen devoted to politics, but to compare the best amongst them all with the great soldier and patriot then taken from us would have been as ridiculous as to have spoken of the wherry alongside with all the importance and admiration usually bestowed upon a three-decker.

His was no churchwarden-like policy, and his reputation for general sagacity, as well as for military leadership, was as fully recognized abroad as it was with us. Not very many years before his death war between Prussia and France was believed to be inevitable. As the Prussians had no great general then, their king turned to Wellington and asked him to take command of the Prussian army should war be forced upon him. His answer was very characteristic of the man. He said he was the Queen's servant, and would do as she ordered him. This is a fact little known, for the expected war was postponed for another generation.[1]

[1] The negotiation in this matter was carried on by Lord William Russell, then our Minister in Berlin, and copies of the correspondence were in the hands of Lord Arthur Russell, his son, who showed them to me.

CHAPTER II

Land in India—On Active Service in Burmah in 1852–3

ALL the soldiers on board the *Maidstone* were sent by river from Calcutta to Chinsura, an old Dutch settlement, where the English drafts for regiments in the Bengal Presidency were then annually collected before being sent to their respective destinations. There we were lodged in a long range of officers' quarters, an unusual thing in India, and every room was crowded with cornets and ensigns awaiting their marching orders. It was a dull dreary mildewy-looking place, without any possible amusement, except snipe-shooting in the neighbouring rice fields, where snakes abounded, and bad fever was to be easily caught. However, neither snakes nor dread of fever deterred boys like myself from the sport, for the snipe were plentiful. I wish all our amusements had been as harmless. The church stood within twenty yards of our verandah, and its tower was adorned with a clock whose dial terribly and temptingly resembled a target. Idling all day, it was a frequent amusement to use it for pistol practice, until it became so plastered with bullets that either the works were injured or the hands were prevented from moving. At least something of the sort took place one day, for the

clock suddenly stopped, and thenceforward during the remainder of our stay at Chinsura the hands pointed to 11.15.

One evening a party of young officers started to pay a visit to the French settlement of Chandernagore. It was within an easy drive for a one-horse buggy, along a level road. The party dined at the inn there, and all partook freely of French wines. Having paid the bill they started to return, and a very jovial and a somewhat too noisy lot they were. As luck would have it, before leaving the settlement—it is only about a mile square, one side being the river—they had to pass a guardhouse of French sepoys. Not thinking much of any native soldiers, and having a thorough contempt for those in the French service, the Devil prompted one of the party to propose they should stop and disarm this guard. No sooner said than done—they seized the arms of the guard and dispersed the sepoys, who fled for their lives.

The poor clock had been destroyed and did not remonstrate, but the governor of this French settlement did, and there was a terrible uproar. His flag had been insulted! However, before anything serious could come of it, the young perpetrators of this silly joke were on their way to join their regiments in the North-West Provinces, the Punjaub, etc., etc. I think what most led to this mad incident was a British contempt for this ridiculous little settlement, not larger than a good kitchen garden in the midst of our great Indian Empire.

While I was at Chinsura, one of the great annual Hindoo festivals came off. Such beating of tom-toms and picturesque processions to the river ghats! A native who supplied us with all we needed in the way of beer and wine, invited

me to his house to see the god he had had built for the holy function. Each family of any note or fortune in the place had their idol made for the solemn rite. It looked somewhat like the images of the Virgin Mary in the Catholic churches, except that instead of being draped in a satin costume of Parisian fashion, it was clothed in flowing garments more suited to an Eastern climate. There was the same amount of sham jewels in both instances. The native idol was upon the last day of the festival carried in noisy procession, surrounded by ardent and fanatical believers, to the river, into which it was thrown, and thus confided to the waters, so sacred in their eyes. Made of mud, it soon returns to whence it came. My native host confided to me with great pride that his idol had cost him 150 rupees, an amount then equal to £15.

I made one or two trips to Calcutta, to see its fort and Government House, on whose top stood many of the huge, gruesome birds known as adjutants. I saw a little of society, and was astonished at the luxury in which the members of the great Indian Civil Service then lived.

Chinsura was soon clear of all troops, except the draft for the regiments then in Burmah. All through the months spent in the voyage out, I had looked forward hopefully to be in time for some of the military operations then being carried out in the valley of the Irrewaddy, and every day spent on the banks of the Hooghley was to me so much time misspent. Like all young soldiers, I longed to hear the whistle of a bullet fired in earnest; and as days went by, the opportunity of doing so seemed to elude me. It seemed as if I should miss the Burmese campaign altogether, and return home without having seen a shot fired.

The long hoped for orders arrived at last, and the 80th

draft from home duly embarked in one of John Company's steamers for Rangoon. General Godwin, an old man in a wig, who then commanded the army in Burmah, had proved himself to be a man of energy in this, his second Burmese War. All the kingdom as far as Prome had been conquered and annexed to our empire, and there seemed to be nothing left to do. The Civil servants from India had begun to arrive, and to set up those many offices of revenue, administrative and judicial establishments, which in all our Eastern possessions are the outward evidence of a civilized government. The European troops were far from healthy, bad fevers and cholera diminishing their numbers sadly. This had been the case in a still more marked degree in the former war, during which every known hygienic law was scouted. My occupations were few. I was drilled every morning, and taught the ordinary movements of a squad and company. The whole 80th detachment being recruits like myself, were similarly occupied in learning the goose step, and those "extensive motions," which then constituted the only physical drill taught the soldier. We lived in wooden huts inside the great and well-built stockade the enemy had erected at the beginning of the war. It consisted of a substantial rampart about twelve feet wide on top, and revetted within and without by great teak logs placed vertically with the lower ends sunk in the ground. The intervening space was filled with well rammed earth. The logs of the outer revetment stretched up some six or more feet above the terreplein of the rampart, every fourth or fifth log being cut some three feet shorter than the rest to form loopholes and embrasures along it. There were many flanking towers, and the gates were well protected with traverses made in a similar fashion. Practically

it formed a square, each side being about a mile long. It joined the hill—partly natural, but still more of it being made by man—on which stands the magnificent Shue Dagon pagoda; strongly entrenched, it thus served the purpose of an interior keep. These ramparts were occupied at night by our native infantry, the gates having strong guards upon them at all times, and beyond the pagoda on its eastern face a strong picket of British soldiers was mounted day and night. It usually consisted of so many men from each of the detachments left behind when the army had advanced on Prome. A guard so furnished was not likely to be either a very harmonious or efficient protection; and what made it worse was, that since the arrival of the drafts from home for the regiments up the river, there was always in it a strong leaven of badly drilled and worse disciplined recruits.

Not long after landing I found myself in orders to command this "outlying picket." I was very proud, but the consciousness that I was absolutely unable even to move any body of men on parade, and ignorant even of the required words of command, introduced a strong element of shyness and funk into my feelings of satisfaction. As regarded the art of outpost duty, few knew it theoretically better than I did. I could have passed a high competitive examination in all the then commonly known books on light infantry, and its mode of employment in the field as practised by our army in the Peninsula. For years back I had spent my spare money—it was not much, however—in buying all such books, so that my little military library far exceeded in size and useful works those of even our old generals of that time. But although I knew what the objects of these outposts were, and how I could secure them, what I should

do to strengthen my positions, and was well read in the many ruses I had to guard against on the part of an enterprising enemy, I was absolutely unequal to the mechanical operation of getting my men from their own parade ground to the outpost in question. Prompted, however, by a good-natured sergeant, who in years might have been my father, I succeeded, much to my delight, in marching off my party and in drawing it up, facing the old picket I was to relieve. My picket was made up of men belonging to the Royal Irish, the King's Own Light Infantry, and to the South Stafford Regiment, to which I then belonged. On parade they stood according to the seniority of their regiments from the right, in the order I have placed them. Such was and still is the rule, so that in a line made up of several regiments or detachments of regiments, the Royal Irish, being the senior of the Queen's regiments then in Burmah, would always have been on the right of the line. The subaltern I relieved told me that he had numbered off from the left, so that I should number off from the right; and away he marched with his men, giving me no further information or advice. In accordance with what he told me, I ordered my picket to number off from the right. The right-hand man of the Royal Irish positively refused to do any such thing, adding, as his excuse, "Shure, they're always numbering off from the right." I felt horrified at my inexperience, but ordered him to be made a prisoner. It was not until I had made three of these villains prisoners that I came to a man who obeyed my order. Of course these three men, seeing that I was very young and absolutely ignorant of my drill, thought they would, in their Hibernian fashion, bamboozle and perhaps terrify me. However, I sent back all three to their own lines, and had them replaced by three others.

ON OUTLYING PICKET

My first night's picket duty had begun unfortunately. Whenever it came to the turn of the Royal Irish to find the sentries, they invariably fired at enemies they pretended to see approaching the post. This entailed upon me many long weary walks round my line of sentries, although I knew well they were doing this to spite me for having sent back as prisoners three of their comrades for disobedience of orders. But angry as I was at these many tramps in the dark over broken ground, I laughed to myself at the ingenious, amusing and entirely untruthful accounts they gave me of why they had fired, and by doing so had alarmed the picket. Some had evidently fired at stray cows, others at nothing, though had I believed their stories I ought to have sent back for reinforcements to repel the numerous hostile bodies of Burmans they swore to have seen approaching them.

It was a lovely night, and I walked up and down in front of my picket for many hours. The great Shue Dagon Pagoda, rich in gilding and near at hand, stood out in the starlight, a silhouette against the deep steel-blue of a clear Eastern midnight sky. The lightest breath of air rang several of the gilt bells which studded the graceful, umbrella-shaped crown in which this lofty pagoda ended. The tongue of every bell had a sort of heart-shaped plate attached to it, which caught the gentlest wind, so their music was practically continuous.

In the profound stillness of night this soft murmur of sweet-toned bells, some 500 feet above me, was delightful. I remember it still as if I had heard it last night; I remember how, as I walked up and down, by the pile of arms, my boyish mind ranged from warlike aspirations to thoughts of home.

I was very proud of being actually in command of an

outpost, and I carefully went over in my mind the many lessons I had learnt from military books on the subject. I planned what I should do if attacked, and oh, how I longed to be attacked!

My picket was lodged in a highly-carved wooden Poongey house, and on the opposite side of the narrow road where it stood was another very similar, but smaller, building. This was made use of by the officer. Tired and sleepy, more than once I lay down on its boarded floor; but rats abounded, and an abominable lizard, calling out "chuck-chew" all through the night, made sleep difficult. There was a common belief that this particular lizard was dangerous, and that its bite, if not fatal, was serious. I had and still have the greatest horror of all reptiles, small and large, and these Burmese lizards, with their hideous heads and bright many-coloured bodies, made me shudder as I thought of their possibly running over my face when asleep.

I have been on outpost duty in other campaigns times without number, and fifty eventful years have passed since that night; but yet, not only are all its occurrences still fresh in my memory, but so are also the subjects of my thoughts and waking dreams, and the hopes which then filled my breast are still marked there indelibly.

As a boy I had often played in dark evenings at "hide and seek" out of doors; it was a game I loved. In after years, as a regimental officer, how much I was often reminded of that amusement by night outpost duty. As I peered with straining eyes through the darkness towards the enemy's position, to try if I could see any one moving, and as I listened for the noise of hostile patrols or of a word carelessly spoken aloud in my front, the sensations of my youthful games by night came back vividly before me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the night,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds.

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

What a memory of varied, and alas, vanished scenes on outpost duty these beautiful lines bring back to me!

The next morning I had to appear at the orderly room of the Royal Irish detachment. It was a little room in a small teak-built hut, and there Colonel Grattan, C.B., of that historic regiment, daily dispensed justice to his young recruits. He was an old and amusing Irishman, full of quaint stories, and a very pleasant companion. Taken prisoner in the China War, he had been carried about in a cage as a show for the amusement of millions who had never before seen a European. His smiling face and grotesque grimaces always obtained for him a favourable reception. He greeted me pleasantly when I entered his orderly room, where—I may explain for civilian readers—the commanding officer of every regiment and battalion in the Army holds a daily court to administer justice all round. Three prisoners from Tipperary were marched in bareheaded, and were drawn up facing the colonel, who sat, pen in hand, behind a little table which separated them from him. A corporal and a file of the guard, with drawn bayonets, stood beside the culprits, an acting sergeant-major, standing, as all the others were, at "Attention," made up the stage. A solemn silence that somewhat awed me pervaded the scene, and my shyness became greater when the funny-looking colonel addressing me, asked me sternly what complaint I had to make against the

prisoners. I told my story as best I could, being extremely impressed by what I believed to be the gravity of the offence. My military reading and study of the Mutiny Act and Articles of War had led me to believe that, next to striking an officer or running away in battle, these prisoners had committed the most heinous offence in absolutely refusing to obey a lawful command when on outpost duty before the enemy. I expected they would be at once sent to trial before a general court martial, and either sentenced to death, or if their lives were spared in consideration of their youth and entire ignorance of a soldier's duty, they would at least be transported.

When I had finished my awful indictment, the colonel, with his funny little grey eyes, frowned from under his long grey eyebrows, first at me and then in sternness at the boy prisoners before him. There was an awful pause; you could have heard a pin drop if any one there had had such an evidence of civilization ready for the occasion. I held my breath, not knowing what was coming. I looked at the sergeant-major; his face was wooden and devoid of all expression as he stolidly looked straight before him into nothing. In a moment a volley of oaths from the colonel relieved the atmospheric pressure. He called the prisoners "limbs of Satan," and choking, partly at least I should say from an assumed fury, and partly because his vituperative vocabulary had come to an end, he jumped to his feet, upsetting the table, with its ink bottle, papers, etc., and rushed upon the prisoners, kicking hard at the nearest, and crying aloud: "Get out, ye blackguards; never let me see you again." Whether it was that the prisoners were accustomed to this mode of justice and, being frightened, were anxious to avoid the toes of their colonel's boots as he

lashed out at them or not, they turned round and ran for their lives, the sergeant-major after them, with their caps, which he had been holding—according to regulation—whilst this strangely scenic trial was being enacted.

I was in dismay, and for a moment thought of running too, but seeing the old colonel burst out laughing, I tried to smile, but it was an unhealthy attempt at hilarity on my part. However, being assured the men would never forget the scene or misbehave again, I went away, feeling rather that I had been the culprit, and had only escaped condign punishment through consideration of my youth and complete ignorance of all military customs and laws. I don't know whether these three boys from Tipperary retained a lasting remembrance—as I did—of this curious mode of administering justice, but I am sure their colonel's conduct was far more in consonance with their views of propriety, and far better suited to the case, than any sentence of imprisonment or trial by court martial would have been. I laugh now as I think of the whole scene, and as I do so I feel all the more how necessary it is that Irish soldiers should have Irish officers over them, who understand their curiously Eastern character, and who are consequently better able to deal with them than strangers can.

We now have a far better taught body of officers and a far more highly trained rank and file, and there is an infinitely keener sense of duty alive amongst us all than formerly. The Army is far more of a profession, I might truthfully say of a learned profession, than it was. Since purchase was abolished, all officers feel that promotion and distinction, according to their natural talents, is within the grasp of those who will work hard, and who are determined to make themselves thoroughly efficient as military business

men, and fit to lead others. We no longer flog our men, and there has grown up—very much I believe in consequence of that fact—between them and us an intimate feeling of comradeship and friendship that did not then exist.

It was always my practice to collect information about the inhabitants of any place where I found myself. The manners, customs, means of livelihood, and especially the religious belief of distant races, interested me greatly and gave me much to say in my home letters. Upon arrival in Burmah, I knew nothing of Buddhism; had read nothing, I may say, about Buddha or his holy life, and regarded the system of religion he founded as merely one of the many phases of idolatry which I foolishly believed to be so common in Asia. Like most ignorant boys, I assumed that the Koran contained the only religious teaching outside our Bible worthy of study. Mahomet was such a splendid character as a man, and his faith resembled so much that of Abraham, of Moses and of Joshua, that it took easy hold of my youthful imagination. Those great fighting kaliphs, who, with the Koran in one hand and the sword in the other, had spread their religion and their arts and sciences over so much of the world, had always been heroes to me. There was a simplicity and an open manliness about their religion. The Old Testament had always and still has a deep, a holy charm for me. It is so human, and its heroes come so near in character and in faith to those of early Christianity. I soon learnt in Burmah how much there was in common between my simple faith and that of the Buddhist, when divested of what I may term its speculative philosophy. Every morning there went past my hut one or more pongees —the native priests—begging for the food they required for the day. Their closely-shaven heads and canary-yellow

garments were everywhere respected. The people did not cringe or bow or kneel before them in any superstitious awe of their priestly attributes, but welcomed them as holy men devoted to their religion, and as the schoolmasters of the young. They were universally regarded as good men who worked at an occupation which brought them no worldly wealth, but which was necessary for the common good. They were not only priests, but secular schoolmasters, and the result of this system was that one rarely met a Burman who could not read, write, and do simple sums in arithmetic. Centuries before we had any system of national education there was in existence in all countries where Gauatma was worshipped a well-established educational system for the young. In my daily rides round Rangoon, it was pleasant to hear the hum of children's voices repeating their daily lessons as I passed each village or district schoolhouse. How often I thought then of the hundreds of parishes at home without either school or schoolmaster, though the squire's house was large and many of the neighbouring gentry were fairly rich. The contrast was not to the credit of our Christianity. Yet we called the Burmese barbarians and heathens, and dubbed them "poor soldiers" because they did not understand modern war!

To me, as to all men arriving in Burmah from India, the people of the former country seemed a much superior race. If you listened to some Bengalee, or to any two of your native servants as they talked amongst themselves, all their conversation was invariably upon the subject of money, of food, and the quality of the water in the locality. Those subjects were apparently always uppermost in their minds, and as they conversed no smile on their faces told you that life brought them any pleasure. A serious and

a very poor people, whose existence seemed to be one of constant struggle for the necessaries of life, and into which amusement in any form seemed to enter little. But their annual religious festivals and the domestic events of all men's lives, marriage, birth of children, and the death of wives or brothers, were their recognized opportunities for display. No matter how poor they were, they would spend their last pice, and would even have recourse to the village money-lender to enable them to mark these family events to the best of their ability. The tom-tomming—drum beating—especially at night, announced that the poor Hindoo was celebrating some domestic occurrence which custom—that most horrible of tyrants in all ages and amongst all peoples—required him to notify to his neighbours after a certain long established fashion. But, watching the man's face and the countenances of his friends who joined him upon the occasion, though it may, from a sense of propriety, have been a matter of pride, or, at best, of satisfaction to him and his family, no smile, no laugh or tears bespoke the man's inner feelings. To the ignorant stranger the whole affair seemed to be a matter of duty, but not one of either rejoicing or of sorrow.

But how different were the Burmans. They did not take life thus seriously, but laughed and talked, and looked you straight in the face as they spoke to you. They are fond of fun, of football—as they play it—and devoted to cock-fighting. As a people they are of a decidedly Mongolian type, with broad shoulders, strong necks, long bodies, and short bandy but muscular legs.

When contrasted with the mild Hindoo, they strike you as a fine manly people, who enjoy life, and ought to make good soldiers. But although brave hardy fellows, that can

live upon little, you cannot convert them into disciplined soldiers. They revolt against restraint, and if punished for any offence against discipline they desert, and once in their dense forests they are hard to find. They stand being shot at well when behind stockaded defences, but they dislike leaving them, even though a favourable opportunity presents itself, when they might easily inflict great loss upon their enemy. They are by nature woodmen, carpenters, and wood-carvers. With the dah—the sword of the country—which no Burman then went without, they can erect stockades and construct entanglements quicker than other forest races. The quantities of bamboo with which the country abounds, help him in the construction of these quickly devised and cleverly-made defences, to which he clings in action. His leaders throughout all our Burmese wars have failed him. They invariably preferred to live to fight another day rather than expose themselves. It seems as if they thought the privates alone should be exposed to serious danger, and generally they got safely away early in most fights. The soldier we encountered everywhere in action was a manly and independent fellow. His clothing is simple, and consists merely of a small pugree twisted through his long hair, a short cotton jacket, and a cloth wrapped round his loins and thighs, the long ends of which usually hang down from his waist in folds before him. His weapon is the dah, or native hiltless sword, and any sort of old musket. A cloth fastened round him contains his rice, and the pot to boil it in is usually slung to the barrel of his ill-kept firelock, together with the mat which forms his bed. A few bananas and a little native tobacco constitute his luxuries.

The difference between the men at Rangoon and those we had left behind us on the Hooghley was very marked,

but that between the women struck us all as greater still. The poor little timid cringing female of Bengal was a miserable creature when alongside of the well-built, muscular-looking and much lighter-coloured Burmese women. The former only seemed to exist in two conditions: she was either a very beautifully-shaped child, or a repulsive-looking old hag. Elephantiasis, so common amongst the women on the Hooghley, I never saw in Burmah. To catch sight of the Hindoo girl's face was no easy matter, for she fled at your approach; or, if surprised by meeting you as she came round the corner of a street, the white cotton shawl that covered her head was suddenly jerked over her face as she turned it to the wall until you had passed.

How different were the Burmese women! You met them everywhere, and you heard their laughter before you did so. Strong and upstanding, they looked you straight in the face with none of the diffident and frightened cringing air of the Hindoo. With roses gracefully entwined in their hair, and with a great green cheroot between their lips, or stuck into the large hole always made in the lobe of each ear, they march gracefully along, displaying at each step their well-shaped legs. They evidently criticized you in passing, for upon some remark from one of the party, there was often a hearty chorus of pleasant laughter, in which, however, there was not the faintest tone of insolence. It was a good-natured laugh, made probably at your expense, but made and enjoyed in no angry or inhospitable spirit. Apparently well fed, they took life lightly, with none of that depressing seriousness which seemed to characterize the Bengalese women I had seen during my short stay at Chinsura and my wanderings in that neighbourhood.

The war was apparently over, and I seemed destined to

see no fighting in that country of teak forests and pagodas. I longed to get to Prome, where the regiment was that I belonged to, but as yet had never seen, as on the frontier there I thought I might have some chance of seeing even an outpost skirmish. The dull monotonous and what seemed to me useless life I led at Rangoon lacked every element of the soldiering to which I had always looked forward. I had practically nothing to do beyond learning my company drill for a couple of hours in the early morning. The officers I lived with were neither well read, interesting nor amusing. Old Captain Duperier, who had risen from the ranks and had been many years in the Shah of Persia's service, was my only resource, as he told me of countries and cities I knew nothing of. But my chief occupation was long solitary rides on an excellent Burman pony, and this enabled me to enjoy the beautiful woodland and lake scenery near Rangoon. I added largely to my sketch-book, and made a good military survey of the Burmese defences of the place, adding minute particulars and details of their well-designed and admirably-constructed stockades. Out of the five or six officers of the 80th Regiment then in Rangoon, I think I was the only one who even kept a pony or ever—as far as I knew—went beyond the precincts of what I may call our cantonments.

I had been nearly a year in the Army and had done nothing. This oppressed me, for I was vain enough to think that if I could only have a chance I should make something of it. The world was still before me, but my prospects were far from encouraging. I was eaten up by an inward fire of ambition—selfish and personal perhaps—an intense longing for active service in the field which filled my thoughts all through life until the

sun rose on the morning of June 4, 1893, to remind me that I was sixty years old. And let me here confess what I have never told any one. I have often been asked by foolish people if I never felt nervous when in danger. I don't think that many men when in action have time to be nervous, or at least to analyse what is the real condition of their feelings on the point. But I often thought to myself before the bullets began to whistle near one, whether I should be killed or not that day. I can honestly say the one dread I had—and it ate into my soul—was that if killed I should die without having made the name for myself which I always hoped a kind and merciful God might permit me to win. All through my life—sinner though I have been—I trusted implicity in God's providence, I believed He watched specially over me and intended me for some important work. My numerous hair-breadth escapes in action confirmed me all the more in what perhaps others may deem my presumptuous belief. But though it may have been presumptuous, still there it was to support me through many trials and to cheer me on to fresh efforts.

However, something good was in store for me, though it was brought about by a sad and a disgraceful disaster, and if it afforded me my first chance in life, it also entailed upon me a very severe wound from which I have suffered heavily ever since.

News suddenly reached us that we had met with a serious repulse at Donnabew, in which Captain Lock, C.B., of H.M.S. *Winchester* and many others had been killed, our guns taken, and the remainder of the party had escaped with difficulty. The first accounts we received magnified the disaster, but although on a small scale, as was the whole war, it struck us all with astonishment and horror.

The older officers who had had experience in war shook their heads and said the misfortune was the result of allowing a naval officer to try his hand at soldier's work, of which he knew nothing. Much as from childhood I had always admired the Navy and its great achievements, the more we subsequently learned of the details the more I felt the truth of this military view of the affair.

In the first Burmese War the chief at Donnabew had given us much trouble, and history now repeated itself. A powerful chief—we called him a robber-chief—named Meeah-Toon, who ruled there, had made himself very troublesome by attacking, and often capturing, our native boats employed in carrying supplies and stores between Rangoon and Prome. We said he was a pirate, but his countrymen looked upon him as a national hero. At any rate, he had shown more daring and determination than any other of the Burmese King's generals, and seemed determined to dispute our right to interfere with him. Since our arrival, he had pillaged the country almost to within sight of Rangoon, and trusting to the strong position he occupied about twenty-five miles inland from the river, he defied us. His village was surrounded by a dense and pestilential jungle, and all round it the country was cut up by creeks communicating with the Irrewaddy, and by wet nullahs leading from them. He was strongly fortified, and it was in every way just the sort of position most difficult for a British force to deal with. It was not the enemy's soldiers we had to dread, but cholera, from which even in the best stations there we had already suffered much. Some plucky attacks had been made upon him by boats from our fleet, which tried to work up the bigger creeks and backwaters with which his district abounded. But all these

attempts were repulsed, as the sailors found it impossible to remove the great trees which had been cleverly cut down on the banks of these creeks so as to fall into them, or to get past the teak piles and heavy stakes driven well home into their soft muddy bottoms.

The result was, this prince of dacoits soon began to think his position impregnable and his countrymen far and near to believe that he was too strong for us. Our position in Burmah demanded that there should be no doubt on this point in the native mind, so, early in February, 1853, it was resolved to make a more determined effort to bring him to reason. I think General Godwin was to blame for not taking the matter entirely into his own hands, but apparently still under the impression that the object could be best secured by a boat expedition, he left it to the Navy. It should have been a land operation, planned and led by a military officer, the boats co-operating as best they could.

Captain Lock, C.B., of H.M.S. *Winchester*, then lying at Rangoon, was ordered to make another boat attempt against Meeah-Toon with some 240 seamen and marines, whilst 300 of the 67th Bengal Native Infantry co-operated with them on land. Captain Lock's reputation stood high as an able naval officer and the most gallant and dashing of men. He took with him two small bronze guns on field carriages and some rocket tubes. He soon found he could not force his way to Meeah-Toon's town by any of the creeks, as all were blocked with trees and piles as before. Whereupon he unwisely determined to land his men, and leaving his boats behind to march the twenty-five miles which were supposed to lie between the Irrewaddy and the point aimed at. This at once converted the affair into a land operation, and the naval captain should have placed himself

under the orders of the officer commanding the native regiment. This he did not do, but on February 3, 1853, recklessly pushed forward along a very narrow track through the dense jungle before him without adopting any of the simplest military precautions that are essential for safety, or even to avoid surprise. The colonel of the sepoy regiment was a man with not enough self-assertion to insist upon assuming command, but it was said, and generally believed, that he did venture to remonstrate with Captain Lock upon the foolish rashness of his proceedings. Report at the time said, and I can only write what was then believed and left uncontradicted, that Captain Lock pooh-poohed the colonel, and vowed that he did not want him or his men, and that his own bluejackets and marines were quite able to do the job alone. If this were so, it was fortunate for all concerned that the snubbed colonel resolved to follow in the rear, for when this rashly-led body of sailors was surprised, many being shot down, and a regular stampede had begun, it was only the steadiness and military training of the sepoys, under their own officers, that preserved Captain Lock's party from annihilation. The more I learned subsequently as to what took place, the more evident it became that this disaster was occasioned by Captain Lock's ignorance of military tactics and of the precautions to be taken when marching through a strange forest occupied by an enemy. I prefer to draw a veil over all that followed, but in the confusion of a hurried retreat, the guns, rocket tubes, ammunition, and even the dead, were abandoned to the enemy, and the gallant sailor who commanded died of his wounds a few days afterwards. The loss was thirteen killed and seventy-nine wounded. The enemy followed and harassed the retreating party nearly as far as Donnabew,

and more than once they tried to head the party to cut it off: it was only the disciplined steadiness of the native infantry which then saved the position. My own experience makes me feel that the stern and excellent discipline on board ship is not always so trustworthy when sailors are converted into infantry soldiers ashore. They do exceedingly well as artillerymen in charge of guns ashore, as we have recent cause to acknowledge with gratitude.

Poor Captain Lock, the gallant sailor who with his life paid the penalty of his rashness on land, was buried with military honours at Rangoon, all officers of the garrison attending the funeral. It was an imposing ceremony, and we felt that the Queen had lost an able and daring sailor who, on his own element, was second to none. There was, however, a strong feeling amongst the soldiers that the many lives lost, and the indignity of such a repulse, were entirely due to the rashness of the brave but inexperienced leader.

I remember well the order which General Godwin issued upon the occasion, and how thoroughly it was appreciated. In it, he directed the senior military officer to assume chief command in all mixed expeditions on shore, no matter what might be the rank or position of the naval officer on the spot. He added that, "he justifies this arrangement by reference to the fact that when troops are serving on board ship, the senior naval officer takes command over all the military officers with the force." It is, however, probable that if taught and drilled as foot soldiers, that very process might prevent them from being the splendid fellows they are on board ship, or when used as gunners ashore. Soldiers, in the same way, would make very bad sailors. Admiral Sir William Hewitt, who accompanied me to Koomassee

with a battalion of sailors, was a friend for whom I had the warmest affection, and as a wise and dashing sailor the greatest admiration. He said to me when he had got back to Cape Coast Castle, "Never again will anything induce me to land bluejackets to act as infantry. I will always give you as many as you want to fight guns as artillerymen, but never again as foot soldiers." Such was the result of his experience in Ashantee.

I have such an intense admiration for the Navy, for the splendid daring and courage of all belonging to it when upon their own element that I dislike hinting any fault with either its officers or seamen upon any point. But I wish to leave on record, as a warning to those who come after me, the deliberate opinion of the able and experienced Admiral Sir William Hewitt which I have given here. He had served with distinction in the Naval Brigade before Sebastopol and was always to the fore in our many fights and skirmishes between the River Prah and Koomassee, and saw what sailors could and could not do ashore when used as foot soldiers.

CHAPTER III

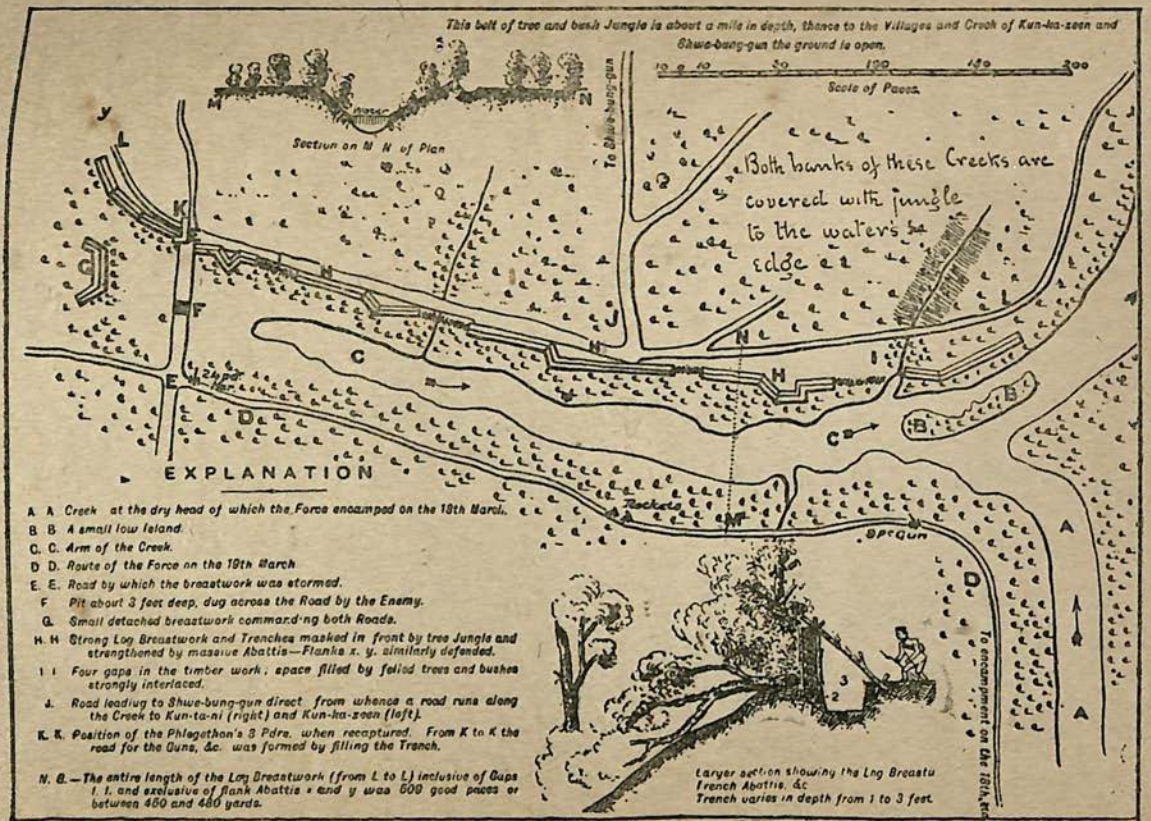
Expedition to Donnabew—Lead a Storming Party—Badly Wounded—Sent Home 1853

AS soon as the news of this untoward event reached Army Head Quarters in Prome, the general commanding the army in Burmah issued orders for the despatch to Donnabew of a force consisting of the undermentioned detachments :—

A small party of irregular cavalry.
200 of the Royal Irish Regiment.
200 of the King's Own Light Infantry,
200 of the 4th Sikhs.
The 67th Bengal Native Infantry.
Detachments of the Madras Sappers.
Detachments of the Madras and Bengal Artillery, with one 12-pounder howitzer, some rocket tubes and two Cohorn mortars.

These troops from Prome were to be joined by the 130 recruits of the South Staffordshire Regiment from Rangoon, who had lately arrived from England.

Brigadier-General Sir John Cheap, of the Bengal Engineers, was selected for the command of this force. It was small, but in the absence of roads through the forest country to be traversed, it would have been difficult to have fed a


This belt of tree and bush Jungle is about a mile in depth, thence to the Villages and Creek of Kun-ka-zeen and Shwe-bung-gun the ground is open.
Scale of Paces
Section on M N of Plan
To Shwe-bung-gun
Both banks of these Creeks are covered with jungle to the water's edge
EXPLANATION
A A Creek at the dry head of which the Force encamped on the 18th March.
B B A small low Island.
C. C. Arm of the Creek.
D D. Route of the Force on the 19th March
E. E. Road by which the breastwork was stormed.
F Pit about 3 feet deep, dug across the Road by the Enemy.
G. Small detached breastwork commanding both Roads.
H. H Strong Log Breastwork and Trenches masked in front by tree Jungle and strengthened by massive Abattis—Flanks x. y. similarly defended.
I I Four gaps in the timber work; space filled by felled trees and bushes strongly interlaced.
J. Road leading to Shwe-bung-gun direct from whence a road runs along the Creek to Kun-ta-ni (right) and Kun-ka-zeen (left).
K. K. Position of the Phlegethon's 8 Pdrs. when recaptured. From K to K the road for the Guns, &c. was formed by filling the Trench.
N. B.—The entire length of the Log Breastwork (from L to L) inclusive of Gaps I. I. and exclusive of flank Abattis x and y was 600 good paces or between 480 and 486 yards.
Rockets
8pr Gun
To encampment on the 18th March
Larger section showing the Log Breastw French Abattis, &c
Trench varies in depth from 1 to 3 feet.

PLAN OF MEEAH-TOON'S POSITION ASSAULTED 19TH MARCH 1853.

larger body of men at any considerable distance from the river.

When the news from Prome told us that a new expedition to Donnabew was being organized, I felt all the more how hard was my fate in being kept at Rangoon. My spirits sank and I seemed to be eating my heart away.

As soon as our very modest dinner was over, I usually took a chair into the open in front of our hot barracks, and there, alone with a big cigar, I listened to the band of the Bengal Fusiliers as it played at tattoo. Towards the end of February, I forget the exact date, I was thus engaged when I saw a native with a lanthorn approach, and behind him the tall figure of our brigade major, "handsome Bob Hawkes," a great favourite, and then a well-known man in India. He asked for the commanding officer, so I jumped up and brought Captain Duperier to him, feeling sure there was something in the wind. In a few minutes it became generally known that orders had been just received for the detachment of the 80th recruits to proceed forthwith to Donnabew to join Sir John Cheap's force, which as yet had accomplished nothing there. In the midst of my intense joy, however, the horrible thought occurred to me that as the junior ensign it was likely I should be left to take charge of the "details," whom one is always obliged to leave behind upon such occasions. The very thought of such a possibility almost maddened me. But as my commanding officer wanted to take me, he told off the senior ensign for this duty, and my mind was at rest upon that point.

We had few preparations to make. It was upon this expedition that I for the first time saw British officers wear flannel instead of linen or cotton shirts, and it was the first time I ever wore one. In every other respect, our clothing

was entirely unsuited for campaigning in a tropical climate. The Queen's Army took an idiotic pride in dressing in India as nearly as possible in the same clothing they wore at home. Upon this occasion, the only difference was in the trousers, which were of ordinary Indian drill dyed blue, and that round our regulation forage cap we wore a few yards of puggaree of a similar colour. We wore our ordinary cloth shell jackets buttoned up to the chin, and the usual white buck-skin gloves. Could any costume short of steel armour be more absurd in such a latitude? The officers of the East India Company were sensibly dressed in good helmets with ample turbans round them, and in loose jackets of cotton drill. As a great relaxation of the Queen's regulations, our men were told they need not wear their great stiff leathern stocks. This was a relief to the young recruits, but most of the old soldiers clung to theirs, asserting that the stock protected the back of the neck against the sun, and kept them cool. I assume it was rather the force of habit that made them think so.

We left Rangoon the first week in March 1853 in a river steamer with a flat in tow. All ranks were extremely crowded and uncomfortable, which made us feel all the more keenly the great thunderstorm that overtook us the evening of our departure. I had never seen its like before. Our anchors dragged in the soft mud of the Irrewaddy, and we were nearly driven ashore upon the right bank. So vivid was the lightning that at each flash we could see the leaves of the jungle trees which stretched down to near the river's edge as they bent before this tornado. The heaviest tropical rain followed, and when it stopped an invasion of the largest and most muscular mosquitos I have ever encountered rendered all chance of sleep impossible. The men, who were

so crowded and packed as to have little lying-down space, suffered greatly, and I felt a brute at being better off in this respect than they were. Everything comes to an end, and the horrors of that night were no exception.

From Rangoon we had about eighty or ninety miles to go up the Irrewaddy in a north-westerly direction against a strong current, and when the tide was ebbing we made little way against it. As we neared our destination we passed more than one raft with a bamboo frame fixed vertically upon it bearing the crucified body of some poor devil whom Meeah-Toon was supposed to have thus put to death. The legs and arms were stretched so as to form a sort of X, or St. Andrew's Cross. Horrible sights these were, and not calculated to raise the robber-chief in our estimation.

We landed at Donnabew in the afternoon of March 6, near a fine poongey house with a very elaborately carved roof. We found Sir John Cheap's force awaiting our arrival, and were informed that it was to start the next day. We moved a little up the river to bivouac for the night.

We were soon all in the water cooling and washing our heated and dirty bodies in the Irrewaddy. I was drying myself on the bank when I heard a shout that a man had sunk. He could not swim, and had gone out too far to where the bank suddenly shelved down steeply. He never rose again, and although helped by several men who swam as well as I did, we could not find him. The water was so thick with mud that nothing could be seen when you dived. This delayed me a long time, as one does not like giving up the search, even after reason declares it hopeless, when up came Major, now General, Sir Harry Holdich, and began pitching into me for this unfortunate occurrence. As I felt

that I deserved more praise than blame for my part in the affair, I was very much hurt and thought I should never like my new commanding officer, who had only just arrived and taken over command of the recruits I was serving with.

Before long Holdich, who was a thoroughly good fellow and a very plucky soldier, having ascertained the facts (not from me, however, for I was far too proud and too angry to tell him what had taken place), came to me and with the generous frankness which always distinguished him, told me he had made a mistake and was sorry for it. He had seen a great deal of service as A.D.C. to his uncle, Sir Harry Smith, and had been badly wounded at Sobraon. He was, for those days, a very young brevet-major, and I felt it a great pleasure and honour to serve under one who had seen so much hard fighting, both at the Cape and in India. He used afterwards to tell me interesting stories of his many fighting adventures, though his modesty made it somewhat difficult to draw these from him.

We started the following day, March 7, 1853, about 2 p.m., having only, as we were told, about twenty-five miles between us and the enemy's stronghold. But as far as we regimental officers could judge, the information we obtained about the country and the enemy's doings was seldom worth much. Sir John Cheap was, I think, badly served by the civil commissioner sent with him, upon whom he had to depend for all news of the enemy. One would have thought that if experience had ever proved anything, or had taught any useful lesson, it was a condemnation of the old practice of sending a civilian into the field to control or influence the movements of an army. It had been discredited with us since Great Marlborough's wars against the armies of France, but in some form or other it had been continued

by the East India Company. Upon this commissioner devolved the duty of collecting intelligence regarding the enemy's doings, his whereabouts and intentions, and also—as a rule—the responsibility of supplying the guides required for each column of troops. Those obtained during this expedition were bad, and often misled us—as I believe—through ignorance of what we wanted. I don't think they misled us from any patriotic motive, but at times from fear of subsequent punishment by their own people. This was a serious matter in a dense and unmapped jungle, whose straggling roads, or rather paths, wound about with no apparent reason for such a constant change of direction. The general course of our march was at a right angle from the river into the great jungle close at hand. Some shots were fired as the main body entered the forest by a rough country wheel-track. The day was extremely hot and the marching heavy, but these shots were a kind of pick-me-up to all of us boys, and at once officer and private took an increased interest in the affair. Some of the enemy's scouts and skirmishers were here and there to be seen, and now and then a puff of smoke and the whiz of a bullet, generally fired high, assured us we had an enemy in front. The recruits I was with spread out into a sort of skirmishing line, but as few of these had ever before fired a round with Brown Bess, or, as far as I knew, had ever fired any sort of gun in their lives, the fire we opened may possibly have had some moral effect, but could not certainly have inflicted any serious loss upon the enemy. Advancing across an open space I saw a man killed for the first time in my life. I was not at the moment in the least excited, and it gave me an unpleasant sensation. He was a Burman, and he was killed by Beauchamp Seymour, who having been

just made a commander, had joined us upon landing as a volunteer to "see the fun." Being then very young, I looked upon him as quite a middle-aged man, and when years afterwards I came to know him well I often reminded him of that skirmish. We pushed on slowly along a jungle cart-track, and about five or six o'clock in the evening, after a good deal of firing "in front," we halted upon an unfordable creek. We had taken with us some twenty or thirty large casks and enough bridge superstructure to make a large raft with them. By the time my detachment had reached the creek, the Madras Sappers, the best of all military workmen, had already unloaded the casks and were busy in the construction of a raft.

My detachment halted for the night in the jungle about four or five hundred yards from the creek in front, and we all began our preparations for a bivouac. Fires were lit, and preparations made for an evening meal. The wood in a jungle does not burn well, but it is very easy to collect sufficient dead stuff for cooking purposes.

The enemy continued to annoy our sappers from the jungle beyond the creek. Many of the enemy fired from high trees, up which they had evidently climbed to obtain a clear view. It was at last deemed necessary to bring up a rocket tube to see how they would stand its alarming noise

Being idle and not having yet had a really good opportunity of experiencing what was the sensation of being under fire, I felt a longing to go down to where the sappers were working. I was drawn there by an irresistible attraction I cannot describe, but was ashamed to confess this to my companions. Watching an opportunity, I strolled as if indifferently away from our bivouac, and quickly reached the bridging party I was in search of. A steep descent led

to the creek from the jungle-covered plateau where we had halted, and I soon became entangled amidst a crowd of native carts laden with bridging materials. Large numbers of draft oxen were munching their corn amongst the carts, and the whole scene was full of life and picturesque interest. There was a good deal of firing from the enemy's side of the creek about 150 yards off, and I heard what I had come in search of, the whiz of bullets as they flew past me, and plunged into the neighbouring trees. I was near the point where the road began to dip abruptly into the valley below, when a loud splashing and somewhat diabolical fizzing scream in the low scrub close by made me turn to see what it meant. It was our first rocket going off, but amidst the interest it aroused I became suddenly aware of a great stampede of the cart bullocks straight towards the spot where I was. I saw in an instant that my one chance of safety was to get behind the nearest cart before they reached me, and I rushed there in all haste. The Royal Irish were on baggage guard, and an old soldier, seeing my rush and my excitement, and not seeing the bullocks, naturally put it down to the effect the enemy's dropping fire had upon me. In the best natured, but still in a somewhat patronizing tone, as from an old to a young soldier, he said, "Never mind, sir, you will soon become accustomed to it." On the spur of the moment I could have killed that man with satisfaction. That any one, especially a private soldier, should doubt my nerve, let me say should in fact attribute fear of bullets to me, was simply maddening. But what could I do? He was as cool as possible, and I was far from being so; indeed this inferred insinuation had aroused the worst feelings within me. I had gone there to test my nerve, to see how I should stand being under fire and what

effect it would have upon me, but I did not bargain for such a trial as this to my temper, and still more to my vanity. I tried to hide my anger and to look pleased, and even answered blandly, though my heart was on fire. By at once taking up an exposed position to observe from, I hoped in my rage to make this old devil of a soldier and those about him realize that although I was young and smooth of face I was as plucky as they were. I made my way back to my bivouac much crestfallen, but not until I had taken in well the manner in which the barrel rafts were put together. I drew sketches of the lashings that fastened the barrels to the superstructure; and longed to help the officer in charge of the work. Although I had never gone through any engineering course, I had a good book knowledge of military bridging which I had learnt from the pages of *Straith's Fortification, etc.*, a capital work which I knew thoroughly well. I had copied its plans and drunk in its letterpress with quite as deep an interest as most boys of my age read Scott's novels.

The first question I usually asked my friend, Sergeant Quinn, every morning as I yawned and stretched myself when I heard the order to "fall in," was, who had died of cholera during the night, and who was then dying. It was a terrible thing at times to be left behind with a dying man, to bury him the moment he had ceased to breathe, and to watch the horrid vultures which from the neighbouring trees scanned us closely, whilst waiting for their prey. They picked a body to pieces in very short time. They never left us, but followed us daily on the march, not as guardian angels, but as loathsome scavengers. In all Eastern wars they seem to scent from afar the carrion they live upon. I had at this time a very fine-looking soldier servant who

had been previously in the 3rd Dragoon Guards. He had asked me to draw on his arm the Prince of Wales' Feathers, the badge of that regiment, so that he might have it tattooed there. The Burmese are very clever at that art, and the device was well done by a skilled tattooer. He was very proud of it, and I had thus impressed upon me early in my career how deep is the affection men retain for their first love, the regiment in which they first serve. This poor fellow died of cholera, and I helped to bury him in a very shallow grave. How many such gallant British soldiers lie thus buried all over the world, marking the routes of the armies that have made our Empire what it is. These men die that England should be great, and they die for her without a murmur, and yet, it is their valour and their self-sacrifice that enables home tradesmen to make fortunes, live at ease, and to marry their sons and daughters into gentle families.

I shall not attempt to record our daily proceedings. We suffered much from bad or dishonest guides, and so occasionally lost our way in the dense jungle. We had frequent little skirmishes with the enemy, who showed their ignorance of war by not inflicting serious loss upon us. It often occurred to me with what ease I could have destroyed my column had I been in command of the enemy. We had at one time to remain halted for five days on a filthy wet nullah waiting for supplies, of which we began to run out. The evening we reached this nullah we all bathed in it, and when swimming and enjoying its muddy waters after a very hot march my companion suddenly came upon a dead body floating in it. This was the water we drank for the five days we were halted there! Is it to be wondered at that we suffered from cholera? We had there one pretty little

afternoon with the enemy, in the course of which we took some pits they had dug to fire from upon our bivouac. During the skirmish we killed a couple of their black water-buffaloes which gave all the detachment a good meal of fresh beef. It was very tough, but it was a great change after that salt red navy-junk upon which, until then, we had lived during the expedition.

On March 17 we resumed our march, and the Royal Irish Regiment celebrated their Saint's Day by the brilliant capture of an entrenched position, in which they had an officer killed.

Upon the evening of March 18, we had scarcely settled down into our bivouac in the dense jungle through which our route lay, when a thick fog fell upon us. We knew we were close to the enemy, for all through the night we could hear their voices and the noise of their dahs as they cut and hacked in adding to the stockade which surrounded Meeah-Toon's village and final position. We were certain that every effort had been made to strengthen it, and with their known skill at such work we felt it would be a hard nut to crack. Camp rumour told us that a wet nullah lay in its front, but the belief that in taking it we should also take the great chief's village and so wipe out the disgrace of Lock's disaster, made us hope it would be a happy, perhaps a glorious end to the expedition. Cholera still pursued us, food was bad and scarce, and owing to the thickness of the jungle and the consequent restricted nature of our nightly bivouacs, few ever had a really good night's rest. Speaking from my own experience, I was so constantly on picket that my sleep was mostly obtained in the early mornings during the intervals between dawn and the beginning of the day's march, and during all the short halts occasioned on the march

by some stoppage in front. It seemed to me that I was on outlying picket on most nights during the expedition, when I did not dare even to lie down lest tired nature should give way and sleep seize upon me. In many ways I enjoyed this picket work, for I thoroughly understood its theory and was rapidly learning its practice. But what pleased me most about it was the feeling of responsibility it conferred. I flattered myself with the belief that upon my exertions then, and upon the way in which I carried out my duty, depended the safety of our bivouac and perhaps of the whole enterprise. This filled me with pride, and young ensign though I was, it flattered my self-consciousness. But the result of this night-work was, that during the subsequent day's march I occasionally fell asleep for an instant of time as I walked, and was as suddenly awakened to consciousness by a bad stumble when for a moment I had some difficulty in keeping erect. Most officers know what it is to be asleep on horseback when on the line of march. When upon a steady horse, with elbows well planted on the holster-pipes, one can thus have many a good five minutes' doze. But who that has ever slept under those conditions does not remember the neck-dislocating shock with which you wake when on the point of quitting your saddle and of parting company altogether with the animal that carries it! And so also was the shock I experienced many a time during these marches on foot, when I woke in the act of falling, only saving myself with difficulty from an ugly tumble.

It was the turn of the 80th Regiment to find the advanced guard the following morning—March 19—and as I was not to be on picket that night, I was told off to command the advanced party when the march began. I was in the

seventh heaven of delight at this prospect. We knew we should have fighting, and most probably end the expedition by the storming of the chief's great stronghold. As I lay down to sleep in my cloak that night I prayed earnestly to God for His protection and that He should be with me in all I did the following day. Soon after dark the usual heavy fog fell upon us and I was quickly fast asleep, too soundly for any thought. Never throughout my life have I been the dreamer of dreams whilst asleep. I suppose a healthy good digestion enabled me to sleep too profoundly for any thoughts or nightmares when once death's image had embraced me either by day or night.

Upon the first streak of light I was on my feet. The heavy fog still surrounded us, and we could not see a hundred yards either backwards or forwards along the jungle path upon whose sides we had bivouacked. The only sound in the air was the cutting and chopping of wood in the enemy's direction, whence also came at times the noise of voices as if of orders given. After the usual poor breakfast and the most meagre of toilets, I was ready "for the road." I don't think we formed up and moved off until about 7 a.m., when the sun had somewhat lightened the fog. What is now commonly called the "point of the advanced guard" consisted of four privates and myself. None of us were twenty years of age, and all were recruits. I knew theoretically the duties of an advanced guard, but had no experience, nor had I ever been drilled in the practice of such duties. Indeed I knew very little of any sort of drill. We moved in the strictest silence along a track with dense jungle on either side, catching now and again a passing view of a nullah that ran parallel to it about twenty-five yards on our right. We occasionally reached a spot where the enemy had recently

had a fire. The Burmese were not an enterprising foe, and never worried us at night, though without doubt they constantly worked round our flanks and rear in small scouting parties through the jungle or along paths known only to them. But during this advance, although we could distinctly hear them chopping and felling trees, we saw nothing of them until after an hour's extremely slow marching, with constant halts, we reached a point where the path turned suddenly at right angles to the left. There the wet nullah we had been following joined another and apparently a larger stream, on the other side of which we could see the enemy's stockade plainly, and within about a hundred yards of us.[1] They had apparently no pickets thrown out to their front, and were consequently quite unconscious of our close proximity. The absence of any path leading down to the nullah near us proclaimed it to be unfordable. All orders I received were brought to me by messengers from the rear, and we now spoke only in whispers. We could hear the enemy talking volubly on the other side of the nullah along which we now marched, for a fog seems to carry sound with distinctness, and the constant noise of chopping told us they were still hard at work upon their stockades. As the fog lifted, by peering through the jungle I could see their works along the other bank of the nullah, which seemed to be about eighty yards from me. I was ordered, as I turned to the left along the path by the newly-discovered nullah, to move slowly and to be careful not to show myself and to maintain strict silence. Major Holdich came to me with these orders before we turned off to the left, and he then went back to the main body. I felt very

[1] From subsequent measurements taken of it, we found that, from right to left, it extended 400 yards.

much as if I were once more playing at hide and seek in some plantation at home during evening twilight.

Our halts became more frequent, I suppose on account of the difficulty in closing-up the rear of the column, where our two guns and the native carts with the ammunition were frequently in trouble. As the day grew brighter I could see considerable numbers of Burmese on the far bank, one or more being mounted and evidently men of importance. My orders were to advance as far as I could without being seen, and on no account to fire until fired upon. During one of our many halts, when expecting every moment to be discovered, I had one of these mounted Burman leaders covered with a "Brown Bess" musket for some time, and longed to loose-off at him. However, I fully realized the importance of getting further up the nullah unperceived to the point where I was told we should be able to cross it. It struck me as immensely strange that an intelligent enemy in their own jungle should allow us to march unperceived along the front of their position, by a path running parallel to it and within eighty or a hundred yards of their stockade. It did not speak well for their warlike instincts or military training. But the fact was, they had no idea we should quit our bivouac in their neighbourhood until the sun had risen high enough to clear off the dense fog which usually hung all the morning over the jungle. I remember well during one of our hundred-and-one halts, as I sat cross-legged on my sword with my four boys lying down by me, all keenly watching the enemy's proceedings beyond the nullah, how I wondered to myself if I should be killed or wounded that day—a common thought to those whose minds are unemployed upon such occasions. Being well in front, I felt that I was at least bound to be in at the death.

As we advanced the nullah seemed to get somewhat narrower, the water in it less deep, and its banks, especially on our side, less steep.

At length the enemy became suddenly aware of our presence, and opened fire upon us all along their line. The whiz of bullets and the sound of their thud into the stems of trees about us at once added enlivenment to the position. Their fire was too high, and it was not until we began to form up to our right, facing the enemy, that I saw any one fall near me, but before the place was taken all the four boys with whom I started in the morning were hit. The detachments of British troops were now withdrawn into the jungle and formed into line facing the enemy's works; our two guns, which had been far behind, were now brought up and into action. The plot thickened, and the position became exciting. I do not remember all the particulars of what took place, indeed the jungle was so thick I could see little beyond what was going on immediately round me. We were ordered to advance at last, why or for what purpose I know not, but the advance is well marked in my memory, because we had to pass over a line of the 67th Bengal Native Infantry, then lying down. They seemed in an abject funk, and I believe could not be got on by their gallant officers. As we passed over them, our men abused them in strong terms, which they seemed in no way to resent. There was a very fat soubadar lying prone with his head and body as close to mother earth as his fat stomach would admit of, where I crossed this line of sepoys. My knowledge of Hindostani was then most limited, and as is generally the case with men lately arrived in India, it consisted chiefly of very coarse terms of abuse. These I freely hurled at this cowardly native officer, whilst with all my might I

kicked the most protruding part of his body as I passed over him.

About this time my chum, Lieutenant Wilkinson, of the South Stafford, was shot through the arm, and his bone badly smashed. I tied it up quickly, as best I could, with the silk pocket-handkerchief I had been using as a sword knot, but the wound was a very bad one. In the *mêlée* I found myself for a little in the midst of a Sikh regiment. What a brave lot they were! and such a contrast to the cowardly Hindostanees of the 67th Bengal Native Infantry Regiment, who would do nothing, and who, like their native officer I have mentioned, persisted in lying down on the ground to avoid the bullets. This was the first time a battalion of Sikhs under British officers had been in action, and all were anxious to see what they would do. They were an example of splendid daring to every one present. It was then I saw their commanding officer, Major Armstrong, knocked over by a bullet that hit him at the top of his forehead, which it smashed, and, to all appearances, lodged in his brain. It was a dreadful wound, but, strange to say, it did not then kill him.

About this time, some one in authority, perhaps the general, arrived on the scene, and it was discovered that the nullah shallowed out and was quite dry to our left front where the regular path to Meeah-Toon's village led across it. The British detachments were by this time tolerably well mixed up together without any order whatever, and the noise of the firing made it difficult to hear anything or make oneself heard. However, a storming party were called for and that was just what I longed for. Another officer, Lieutenant Allan Johnson—afterwards a very distinguished man—also volunteered. Collecting as many men as possible,

we started down that narrow nullah path at a good fast double, the two officers leading. The two naval guns, abandoned unspiked by the navy in poor Captain Loch's disaster, were firing as quickly as they could be fired down the path, whilst the enemy thronged the stockade and firing as quickly as they could load, shouted to us in Burmese "Come on! Come on." But we were doing well, the pace was good and steady, and I soon realized there was no water to be crossed along the path before us. Lieutenant Allan Johnson and I cheered lustily as we charged, the men behind doing so also—the noise was great. For the moment I was in a heaven of ecstatic excitement when the ground suddenly gave way under me, and owing to the pace I was going at I fell with some violence four or five feet into a trap-hole that had been cleverly covered over with brushwood and earth. I must have struck some stake in it, as for the moment I was dazed, and more or less knocked out of time. Quickly coming to myself, I jumped up—as was natural—on the enemy's side of this *trou-de-loup*, but, horror of horrors! my storming party had melted away and I found myself alone, whilst I was greeted with yells from the enemy close at hand. The position was awkward, but my mind was clear and prompted me to jump back at once into the pit for shelter whilst I collected my still somewhat scattered senses. My thoughts as I lay in that *trou-de-loup*, are not amongst my pleasant memories. Not more than thirty yards from me the enemy were in large numbers shouting and in the enjoyment of their momentary victory calling out to us to "come on!" Their fire became brisk, and it struck me they delivered it in volleys. If I remained where I was I felt that any Burmans sallying out would have me at their mercy. I had dropped the pistol

a brother ensign had lent me before leaving our bivouac, and a tailor-provided sword was my only weapon. I quickly realized that, come what may, I must run back; it was my only chance. I have no idea of how many minutes I was in that pit, but it seemed an age at the time, and long, long ago though it be, and many as the tight places have been in which I have since found myself, none recall such indelible, such disagreeable memories. The horror of having to run for my life is still present with me as if these events had occurred but an hour ago. Nothing is more burned into my recollection than the dread of being shot in the back, for run away I felt I must; it was my only chance, and not a minute was to be lost. I waited until I thought the enemy had emptied most of their muskets in a volley, and then jumping up, I ran as I never ran before or since. Out of breath, I threw myself on the ground amongst my comrades when I reached the line of redcoats, with some little feeling of shame in my heart at being thus seen in the act of running away. I ought to have thanked God for my escape, but I was in the vilest of tempers, for I felt the men behind me had not behaved well. Had they pressed forward as they should have done when I was caught in the trap, we should have taken the place in another five minutes. But they were undrilled recruits, and there were too few of us, and there was not enough backing-up from behind. Had a formed company with its officers been there, the whole thing would have been over in a very few minutes, as I have already said. As for me, I felt ashamed of myself and surprised at the conduct of the boys who had failed to back me up as they should have done. I thought this then, but don't think so now, for I did not then know how to fire men around me with courage.

Sir John Cheap and Major Reid, of the Bengal Artillery, now came up, and our one howitzer and one 9-pounder gun were sent for. Fire was opened from them at very short range, and I remember how much I admired the coolness and indifference to the enemy's bullets displayed by Lieutenant Magrath of the Madras Artillery and the others who served them.[1] For each round, the gun was laid just as it would have been at any ordinary target practice at home.

While this was going on, parties of the Royal Irish and of the King's Own Light Infantry kept arriving, and the remainder of the 80th detachment joined those already with me in front. All were, however, much mixed up, as the jungle prevented any regular formation. Our shell fire, it was thought, had made some impression, and the general called for another storming party. Naturally, I jumped up, saying I knew the way, having been over it before, and a Lieutenant Taylor, of the Madras Native Infantry, who was interpreter to the King's Own Light Infantry, said he would go also. I had made his acquaintance the day before to tell him I had in my baggage a small parcel for him from a cousin at home. I collected all the 80th men I could, and having warned Taylor of the *trou-de-loup* into which I had fallen when leading the previous storming party, off we started with a yell, every one near us cheering lustily. We all ran forward at a good pace under what seemed to be a well-sustained fire from the enemy's works. I could see a considerable number of them on the top of the parapet or stockade, and above all the noise one heard their defiant shouts of "Come on! Come on!" in the Burmese tongue. What a supremely delightful moment it was! No one in cold

[1] That gallant Irishman is now a general, and I am proud of being still the friend of so brave a soldier.

blood can imagine how intense is the pleasure of such a position who has not experienced it himself; there can be nothing else in the world like it, or that can approach its inspiration, its intense sense of pride. You are for the time being, and it is always short, lifted up from and out of all petty thoughts of self, and for the moment your whole existence, soul and body, seems to revel in a true sense of glory. The feeling is catching, it flies through a mob of soldiers and makes them, whilst the fit is on them, absolutely reckless of all consequences. The blood seems to boil, the brain to be on fire. Oh! that I could again hope to experience such sensations! I have won praise since then, and commanded at what in our little Army we call battles, and know what it is to gain the applause of soldiers; but, in a long and varied military life, although as a captain I have led my own company in charging an enemy, I have never experienced the same unalloyed and elevating satisfaction, or known again the joy I then felt as I ran for the enemy's stockades at the head of a small mob of soldiers, most of them boys like myself.

We were getting on well when we reached the broken-down trap-hole into which I had fallen an hour or so before. Taylor went to its left, I to its right, and just a few paces beyond it, I saw him tumble head over heels, and at a few paces farther on, when running hard, I turned a somewhat similar somersault. It was, I suppose, the pace I was going at that caused me, as I fell heavily, to do this. In a second I was sitting up, shot as I afterwards found by a large jingall bullet through the upper part of my left thigh. I tried to stop the bleeding with my left hand, and remember well seeing the blood squirting in jets through the fingers of my pipe-clayed gloves. I cheered and shouted, and waved

my sword, calling upon the men to go on. There was a splendid fellow behind me, Sergeant Quinn, of the 80th, whom I have already mentioned. Seeing how badly I was hit, he wanted to help me back. Any attempt to do so would have been the end of at least that storming party, so I shouted all the louder, "go on, go on," and this he did in splendid style. In a few minutes he and those he led—for he was then in command—had clambered up the roughly-constructed stockade and the garrison bolted. Some more men coming up from the rear carried poor Taylor and put him beside me, where he bled to death. He too was shot through the thigh, the bullet in his case cutting the femoral artery. Mine was a remarkable escape. A doctor soon arrived on the scene and put on a tourniquet, which hurt me, but allowed me to be moved. I had lost blood heavily, and was consequently extremely weak. I passed a bad night through weakness and mosquitoes in a hut in Meeah-Toon's village, and the following morning I was taken off in a man-of-war's boat. Winding a devious passage down a creek, we had to saw and cut away piles and other obstructions placed there by the enemy. More than once before our boat reached the open river, the enemy's skirmishers showed themselves, and appeared inclined to show fight. A little skirmishing took place, and they finally cleared off. I was at times left almost alone with a few other wounded, and my helpless condition made me realize how easily the enemy might cut our throats. The idea was unpleasant. The lieutenant, or mate, who commanded the pinnace was kindness itself to me, and gave me a complete change of clothes, which was a real luxury. All the things I had on were filthy and covered with blood, and I saw them thrown overboard with much pleasure.

I was soon on board a flat towed by a steamer, but the coupling was so contrived that you could step from one to the other. All the wounded were placed on the deck round its outer edges, and the doctors lived and messed in the middle. Some few days were thus passed on the river voyage to Prome. My chief recollection of it is of my extreme weakness. The tourniquet round my thigh had been slackened (oh! what a relief), but it was for some weeks kept round the wounded limb so that the soldier who was always close to me could screw it up in a moment, should the artery, affected by the great sloughing of the wound, suddenly burst. I frequently remained awake most of the night, for once awake the smell from my own wound, and from those of the men around me, was so offensive that I could not get to sleep again. In those days the doctors starved wounded men to keep down inflammation, and I remember how hungry and greedy I felt each day when the doctors, laughing and eating and drinking in our midst, would not even let me have a piece of roast chicken they were eating, and the smell of which was so tantalizingly tempting. The big wounds like mine were dressed twice a day, and a disgusting operation it was. I shall not enter into details, but those who have been wounded in temperate climates can know nothing of what misery it was in those days to be wounded through the body or through the thigh in an extremely hot country like Lower Burmah.

The wounded were landed late in Prome, and in the dark my dhooley-bearers fell. In my extreme prostration I felt the shock much. The troops were being hutted, and I was put into a little quarter that had been built for an officer. The wounded rank and file were in large Indian double tents,

where at noon the thermometer sometimes registered 130° Fahr. The most it ever rose to in my hut was, I think, 109°. I had a bad time of it for some weeks, for a sort of cholera seized upon me, and for days I hung between life and death. But it is difficult to kill a strong young fellow under twenty. Oh! how tiring to lie awake at night when prostrated with weakness, mental and bodily! How I longed for the first note of the "reveillé" every morning, for it announced that one more horrible night had come to an end. All the prominent events of my stay in Burmah are still remembered, and they interest me when at times I recall them after this long lapse of years.[1]

When well enough to be moved—I don't remember how many weeks it took—I was sent to Calcutta and thence home by long sea round the Cape in the steamer *Lady Jocelyn*. We called at Madras and Point de Galle for passengers, and then made for the Mauritius.

As our big and stately steamer entered the harbour of Port Louis in that island, the intense greenness and rich loveliness of its surroundings impressed me much. Coming from the sea, the beauties of nature strike the visitor more forcibly than when they are approached by land. The harbour of very blue water was filled with ships, great and small, a man-of-war being of the number. In near shore the smaller vessels were so numerous that their masts resembled a close but leafless wood. Above them were the

[1] In winding up his report of our proceedings on March 19, Major Holdich—now General Sir E. A. Holdich, K.C.B.—wrote as follows: . . . "I would beg to bring to your especial notice the conduct of Ensign Wolseley, a young officer who has but lately joined the service, who not only distinguished himself by his gallantry in leading the storming party, but by his judgment in marking the weak part of the breastwork whereby the breach was effected."

ramparts with bastions and outworks whose masonry escarps were visible from the sea, all being closely studded with masonry-faced embrasures from each of which peeped out the black muzzle of a gun. White houses showed themselves on all sides in the midst of rich tropical vegetation. Behind was the town, and beyond it the bluest of mountain ranges whose most remarkable feature was " Peter Bot," with its curiously-shaped hat, the ascent of which is deemed a great feat of strength and of cool-headed determination. Fort Louis has long remained in my memory as one of the most lovely of coloured pictures. Nowhere else have I seen the sea, the earth and the sky combined together into a scene so pleasing to the eye that loves harmony in colour. I tried in vain to copy the scene in my sketch-book, but gave it up as hopeless. A cobalt coloured misty atmosphere, tinged with rose-madder, seemed to hang between you and all you looked at. It was in the sky and in the sea, and lent a hazy, lazy, dreaming, restful tone to everything around you, overwhelming you with positively sensuous enjoyment. In many places the large and graceful leaves of the banana and the boughs of flowering evergreens seemed to bend forward as it were to watch—perhaps admire—their reflections in the bright sea beside them.

The sea-front when seen from the ship, looked a puzzling assortment of works bristling with guns, whose muzzles like sentinels seemed to follow your every movement. Upon landing, it was curious in an English colony to find the inhabitants talking French. Having just come from a land where I had daily tried to think in Hindostani, I fear I interlarded my French so much with that mongrel language that I had some difficulty in making the Mauritian cab-

driver understand when I asked him to take me to the supposed burial-place of Paul and Virginia, the infant hero and heroine of our childhood.

The men in garrison there were healthy, but rum was cheap, and consequently there was much drunkenness. As however, few of our soldiers then could read and write, and had not therefore many amusements, this was not to be wondered at.

Our next calling-place was Cape Town, then still beautiful and undisfigured with its present hideous docks and ugly streets made still uglier by crowded tramcars. Nature created the Capetown Peninsula beautiful with its lovely deep water bay and its glorious background of Table Mountain. Man has striven hard to render it hideous, and has already gone far towards robbing it of its inherent beauty.

After leaving the Cape of Good Hope we called at St. Helena, and St. Vincent. These visits did much to break the monotony of a long journey by sea, and above all things enabled me to visit Napoleon's first burial-place. Bad as he was, his career has always fascinated me in a way and to a degree which that of no other mortal has ever done. His name and achievements were associated with my earliest lessons in history, and had filled me with ambition, perhaps an unhealthy ambition. The cold-blooded Wellington, the great statesman, soldier and patriot, was our national hero, but largely, I think, because he was the man who had defeated the great Corsican disturber of the world. I had often gazed with childish interest at an old coloured picture of Napoleon's St. Helena tomb whilst lost in astonishment at the blueness of the weeping willow which sheltered it. His life and doings have an attraction for the young of all nations which the history of no one else excites, although

he lacked most of the virtues that are instilled into the Englishman as soon as he can learn anything. For truth, and the honour which is based on truth and begotten by it, he cared nothing. But notwithstanding my insular prejudices on such points, I have always felt he was the most remarkable human being known to history. The lawgiver, Moses, the chosen leader of his people, comes in many ways near him; but Napoleon was Moses and Aaron and Joshua all in one.

As I landed in the little decaying port of Jamestown, my thoughts involuntarily carried me back some thirty-seven years to the day when that great man had stepped ashore upon the lovely spot we had selected to be his prison for life. Is the world ever again to possess so great a ruler? If there be a spot on earth where man can best moralize on the vanity of human ambition, surely it is in that little island far away from the busy hum of man where lived and suffered, lied and acted, posed and died, this Colossus amongst human beings. When I then visited and sketched the prettily situated cottage in which he breathed his last, it was used as a farm house, and the farmer had divided the principal rooms into two storeys, the upper one being used as a hay loft. The garden was a mass of weeds, and there was an uncared-for look about the place that made one sad. I thought we should not, for the sake of the small rent to be obtained for it, turn to such uses the last home of the most bitter and powerful of our enemies, and the greatest man who had ever ruled his kind. Between him and universal dominion England had at one time stood alone. We fought him on sea and land: we destroyed his power, and we most properly immured him where he could not escape to harass mankind again. But in all our dealings with him

we should have remembered what he had been, we should have borne with his play-acting, made greater allowance for his character and temptations, his grievances, self-created or not, and the part and character he had determined to play as our prisoner. Moreover, we should never have allowed the house in which he died and the grounds around it where he sauntered, and doubtless pondered over the might have been, to degenerate into the dirty home of a local and unappreciative farmer. Surely there is no sentiment in an English Ministry. But I must not omit to say that our first duty, a duty we owed to the world, was to take care that by no calculable possibility should he ever escape. We accepted a great responsibility, a disagreeable, a thankless obligation, and on the whole we have no serious reason to be ashamed of the manner in which we discharged it. His simple tomb in the reposeful little green valley he had chosen for it, impressed me much more than I had ever been moved by the splendid mausoleum where his bones now rest. Both were made by men alien to him in race and language. One, by the men of the nation he hated and feared most; the other by a former great ruler of France, *Le Roi Soleil*, who, like Napoleon, would, I think, have achieved universal dominion had it not been for the fighting qualities of our race, and for the wisdom of Queen Anne's great general who knew how to make the most of them.

I have always loved to pore over the pages of Plutarch and to study the comparisons he draws so well between the characters of those he usually classes together. But surely impartial men will for ever put Napoleon by himself and in front of all human beings. In judging his character we must never forget that in morality he had no better standard than that preached by Macchiavelli; the exigencies of the

moment, or of the intrigue or business he had in hand, decided his course of action, which was absolutely untrammelled by any fixed laws of right or wrong, by any consideration for others. Personal success, pure and simple, was his aim. In war, all rules which guide honourable men in the daily actions of peaceful life are necessarily ignored. We must break no compact entered into with an enemy, but short of breaking a promise made, we leave no stone unturned whereby we may deceive him. But Napoleon's conduct in peace as well as in war was directed along the lines which all great captains adopt both in battle and in preparing for it. He could estimate and value natural ability in others and knew well how to use to his own advantage those who possessed it. But he could never distinguish between right and wrong, or see in them antagonistic principles in the conduct of public affairs. His mind seems to have been incapable of understanding where or how the unwritten code of honour comes in to calculations between man and man or between nation and nation. The man who would deceive others in the daily business of life by forged telegrams, or even by the deliberate publication of false news, would, I believe, be turned out of our Stock Exchange. But all such practices are fully justified in war, and Napoleon could not apparently perceive why a practice that was recognized as fair in war should be denounced as immoral in peace.

When I reached England I was able to walk fairly well, and a long and interesting visit to Paris made me forget the misery my wound had caused me.

CHAPTER IV

Go to the Crimea—Join the Light Division, 1854

SOON after my arrival in England I obtained my lieutenancy, and was transferred in that rank to the 90th Light Infantry. I joined it in Dublin, and there learnt a little drill, of which I had been previously profoundly ignorant.

Our colonel was a handsome fine-looking old soldier, but in no respect a scientific warrior. He was a Staffordshire man, and heir to a property that had been in his family for many centuries. We were not anxious to retain him, but neither of the majors was thought to be good enough for the command of such a regiment. One of our majors left and was replaced by a first-rate soldier, who although he knew nothing of light infantry manœuvres as practised in those days, and could never drill us, was a "real" soldier, and a credit to us and to the Army. Three years afterwards, as Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, he met a soldier's death when gallantly and ably leading the battalion at General Havelock's great "Relief" of Lucknow.

To those who only know our Army as it exists now, it may be interesting to hear something of our musketry practice before the Crimean War. When in Dublin we fired by companies, a fixed number of rounds per man annually,

on the space left uncovered at Sandymount during low tide. The range was, I think, 100 yards, and the target about six feet high by two and a half wide, was of white calico, stretched over an iron framework. The men, especially the recruits, hated firing "old Brown Bess," which kicked horribly, and which, unless pressed very firmly against the shoulder, always threw the muzzle up when fired.

In the early spring of 1854 the new Minie rifle was given to us. Months were spent in teaching the men how to aim with it, and we were ordered to send an officer to one of the newly opened schools of musketry to learn the theory and practice of rifle shooting. No one cared much about going there, and it was thought an excellent joke when a one-armed officer was selected for the purpose.

The Army at first did not attach much importance to this serious matter of re-armament. We were all too thoroughly ignorant of war and of tactics to comprehend the complete change the rifle was soon to make in the fate of battles, and even in our mode of fighting. All soldiers knew that the Duke of Wellington had to the last resisted the introduction of the rifle musket, and there could be no appeal from his decision. He believed in the volley delivered at close quarters, and quickly followed by the bayonet charge, in which the superiority of the British soldier was instantly apparent. It was a mode of fighting peculiar to us, and had won many a victory for England. Our military histories had taught us to believe in "Brown Bess" as the soldier's fetish. With a bayonet fixed, it became the clumsy pike with which we had so often charged and overthrown Napoleon's finest legions, and, above all things, it was believed to be the weapon best calculated to develop the hand-to-hand fighting qualities and spirit of our men.

Dublin was then a dreary quarter for a man like me who could not afford to hunt, and whose wounded leg prevented him from dancing. Its fragrant (?) river, its quays lined with decaying houses, its squalid streets, made it an undesirable and depressing place of residence. I joined my regiment in Ship Street Barracks, situated in one of the filthiest quarters of the town, though upon one side the barrack buildings joined the Castle. There were two clubs to which almost all my brother officers belonged; one was the United Service Club in Stephen's Green; the other the Victoria Yacht Club at Kingstown Harbour. There was always a good deal of play going on in the garrison; it was high play for men like myself, whose means were small. I avoided unlimited loo, in which "big nights" at mess occasionally ended, and as I only played whist I kept my losses within bounds. But as it was, the money I lost at it would have enabled me to have kept at least one horse whilst I was quartered in Dublin. During the summer, as a rule, very few dined in barracks; most of us, I amongst the number, generally dined at the Kingstown Yacht Club, where the food was good, and it was extremely pleasant after dinner to sit out and have one's coffee in the open air.

During my period of service in Dublin in 1854 I was initiated as a Mason in Lodge No. 728, and under a special dispensation was raised to Master's Degree when under age. Upon returning to Ireland in 1890 as Commander of the Forces, I rejoined that Lodge, and was its Master for two years. I have often been asked if I could point to any advantage any one ever secured from being a member of that most ancient of crafts. My answer has always been that the only wounded officer left in the Redan, on

September 8, 1855, who was taken by the Russians to their hospital in the city, was Captain Herbert Vaughan, of the 90th Light Infantry. This advantage he secured by making himself known as a Mason to the first Russian officer who approached him as he lay badly shot through both legs. The officer said to him in French that he regretted he could not himself go back with him, but would send some men to carry him to the great hospital in rear. There we found him two days afterwards, dying from his wounds. He lived long enough, however, to tell this interesting story.

About this time war was declared with Russia. A feeble and incapable Government had committed us to a most serious undertaking, for which we were in no way prepared. The Czar, misled by some foolish Quakers and others of the peace-at-any-price party, believed their nonsense, and thought that nothing would induce us to fight. This made war inevitable.

No nation was ever committed to a great foreign war for which it was so unprepared. Mr. Bright and the manufacturers of his school had long thought that the surest way to keep England out of all European wars, was to have no army capable of fighting. Almost all the Civil departments which feed an army in the field, and administer to its daily wants, had long since been abolished on so-called economical grounds, and everything that could be done by contract was so done. I remember that the first time my battalion had seen tents since it returned, years before, from the Cape, was one day at a camp drill in the Phœnix Park. It was amusing to find that the tents were brought from the military storehouses to the ground where they were to be pitched, in the ordinary one-horse dung carts of the town

driven by their owners for the job. We had then no military transport of any kind: and yet our Cabinet did not hesitate to declare war with one of the very greatest military nations in the world! Sir Thomas Picton was popularly believed to have shot the last commissariat officer belonging to the Army for incompetence; and although the *Army List* recorded the names of a few others said to be at the Cape and in our colonies, the Home Army, having never seen them, was inclined to disbelieve in their existence.

Every ordnance storehouse in Great Britain was ransacked in order to collect guns and harness and ammunition wagons for the ten batteries of horse and field artillery sent to the East for the war. We had, however, some weak battalions of excellent foot soldiers, and a few attenuated regiments of cavalry, the men of both arms being dressed and accoutred for show. We had no reserves of any kind, and in order to make up to their regulation field strength the thirty battalions of the Foot Guards and of the Line which constituted the Army sent to Bulgaria in 1854, the few battalions left at home were drained of their best men. Our men and officers were beautifully drilled, and would have delighted the heart of Frederick the Great. The officers, brave and gallant fellows, were ready to lead their men anywhere, and the men would follow them to the death. For the peace-preachers who manufactured rum, shoddy cottons, bad carpets, worse guns, and still worse powder for sale to the natives in or near our colonial and foreign possessions, this so-called Army had a supreme contempt. At that period, however, many of our cavalry regiments were largely supplied with the sons of these rich merchants as officers. Indeed, one regiment of great renown in former days was commonly known as the "Trades Union."

But we had been so long at peace that the British officer had ceased to dream of ever being engaged in any European war, and the ambitious amongst us saw little opening for their talents. All who could afford to live out of India hated the thought of going there, and yet it was the only place where there was much likelihood of seeing war, even against Asiatics. As soon as it was known for certain that the 90th Light Infantry must go to India, promotion had become brisk amongst us, for men began to leave the regiment. The 43rd and 52nd Light Infantry had been in Ireland with us, and all three regiments had been put under orders for India at the same time. None of those three had ever been to that land of mosquitoes, and it was a generally accepted rule that they were never to be sent there. But Lord Hardinge, who had become Commander-in-Chief, very properly dispelled these illusions, and put all the three regiments I have named under orders to go there. The first two were despatched, but for some reason the 90th were reprieved for a year, and this happy reprieve enabled us to get to the Crimea. The officers of the 43rd and 52nd exchanged largely into the Foot Guards, the Rifle Brigade and other regiments, but most of those in my regiment who would not go to India left the Army altogether. The result was a good deal of promotion between the date of being put under orders for India and our landing at Balaclava at the beginning of December 1854.

Amongst the officers of my regiment, nice fellows as they were, only a few cared much for the Army as a profession. All were proud of belonging to a splendidly drilled Light Infantry Battalion—drilled according to the practice of war in the Peninsula, before the introduction of the rifled musket. They thought themselves socially superior to the

ordinary regiments of the Line, which were always spoken of as "Grabbies." Many of them were well connected, and some were well off. It was in every respect a home for gentlemen, and in that respect much above the great bulk of Line regiments. But go to India few of them would. The position of some in the regiment prevented them from exchanging at once into regiments at home, but as soon as their promotion came they meant to do so. By far the best soldier amongst us was Captain Barnston, a dear good fellow in all respects; not lovely to look at, but able and clever. A squire of good means and of an old family, he had qualified at the Senior Department—the forefather of our present Staff College. To him and to me idling in Ireland was gall and wormwood when the great bulk of our Home Army had been sent to Turkey and then on to the Crimea. We were at last the only regular infantry left in Dublin, the other battalions doing duty there being English militia. Both of us seriously contemplated exchanging to a regiment in the field; the news of the Alma increased our feverish excitement and our longing to see active service against the Russians. On Sunday, November 12, the battalion was in the garrison church behind the Royal Barracks, when a paper was handed to the senior officer present, and by him sent round the officers' pew. It was an order for us to embark for the Crimea on the following Wednesday, the 15th. I could have shouted for joy, and few of us paid attention to the rest of the parson's sermon from that moment. This sudden order was the result of the news of the battle of Inkerman, and of our heavy losses there.

What a hubbub the barracks were in at once! The officers determined to leave all their gold wings, gold laced

coats, etc., etc., behind, and to obtain a sort of double breasted tunic, which had been just authorized for full dress. The men, however, retained their white wings and lace, for of course our Government could not be expected to rise to the emergency and clothe their soldiers in useful garments! The ship in which we were to embark was not ready for us until Sunday, November 19, when, just a fortnight after the battle of Inkerman had been fought, we embarked at Kingstown in the Cunard paddle steamer *Europa*, the captain's name being Leech. He was a thoroughly good fellow, a gentleman in all his ways and feelings, and he could not do too much for the comfort of the troops on board.

Being subaltern of the day when we embarked, I commanded the regimental guard, which marched in the rear of the battalion. All the men in front of me were at the "trail," so my small party attracted attention by their fixed bayonets, especially as I had charge of some eight or nine prisoners without arms. As we marched along the crowded quays which led from the Royal Barracks to the Kingstown railway station, great crowds surrounded us. These were increased in numbers by the people coming out of church, Mass being just over. The curious sympathy of the Irish with the distressed and the lawless when "run in" by the "cruel Saxon," here showed itself. Being a very British regiment our men had few friends amongst the inhabitants, but as soon as my prisoners attracted the mob's attention I found myself the centre of a crowd that regarded me as a jailer. "Poor boys," I heard on every side, whilst men and women scowled upon me. They did not care if the whole battalion were to be shot in the next Crimean battle, but their feelings were very different for

these prisoners. Many purses were handed to them, and they had a real ovation. They were assumed to be England's enemies because thus guarded, so of course they at once became the heroes, the dear friends, of the Dublin rabble. All mobs are cowardly, but I felt it was merely fear that kept this crowd of corner-boys and their friends from rushing my guard to release the half-dozen English prisoners in its charge.

We were somewhat crowded on board, but such was my joy at getting away that I would willingly have lived in the stokehole during the voyage as the price to be paid for the chance of seeing active service.

The captain had orders to make a quick voyage, and we were consequently soon in sight of Gibraltar, that English sentry-box where red-coated soldiers had kept watch and ward for a century and a half. The Mediterranean was blue and fairly calm, and as we ploughed through it towards the East the climate began to be extremely pleasant. The one topic of conversation on board was, should we be in time to see any war service? Should we reach the Crimea before Sebastopol fell? We put into Malta to coal, and learnt that Sebastopol was still a Russian garrison. I spent the day in visiting many places of antiquarian interest. I remembered Lord Byron's lines about it, and did swear at times as I mounted the "cursed steps of stairs," so common in the picturesque and by no means savoury streets. We halted again to coal at Scutari, having run up the Dardanelles by night, an achievement which few ships had previously accomplished, and not many captains would have then liked to attempt. We found Constantinople *en fête*, colours at every masthead, and at once jumped to the conclusion that Sebastopol had fallen, and that we were

too late. But we shortly understood our mistake. All this show of bunting, etc., was in honour of the Bairam or some other Mohammedan festival. We were slow in coaling, and did not get under weigh again until the following morning at daybreak, as it was deemed impossible to attempt the passage of the Bosphorus by night. I was on the morning watch, and cold and dreary and rainy as was the weather, I enjoyed the scenery greatly, for every inch of shore was classic ground. Its great massive and loop-holed castles took my mind back to the fall of Constantinople, and I pictured to myself the unworthy Christians who lacked the courage to fight in its defence. Those amongst us to whom Gibbon's chapters on the subject were more enjoyable reading than all the novels ever printed, saw those shores then with redoubled interest.

It was a raw, misty morning, and the Bosphorus, which is lovely in nearly all weathers, was looking its worst. Here and there a sentry in a hooded "Grégo" was to be seen seeking shelter, if not warmth, in his box, or under the lee of some projecting angle of an imperial palace; but all other signs of life were absent, and the Turkish world was evidently asleep. As we neared Therapia, our ship steamed close to shore, where the deep channel, running within stone's throw of the bank, makes rather a sharp bend towards the south. The current there is very rapid, and catching the *Europa's* bow, checked her turning movement. For the moment she would not answer her helm and I thought we must go ashore. A long, three-storied terrace of wooden houses stood on the water's edge, and our ship, going straight on, drove its short stout bowsprit right into the western gable of this terrace, at about the height of the first floor. At that same moment our ship began to

turn slowly to starboard, razing, as she did so, several of the wooden houses in the row down to the first floor. The poor astonished Turks, thus roused from their sleep, were to be seen bolting from the tumbling ruins like bees from an overturned hive. The whole thing was over in less than it takes to tell the story, but as we could not at such a dangerous point of the navigation stop to inquire after the killed and wounded, we steered our course, and were soon steaming full power through what were at that season of the year the dreary waters of the Black Sea. Whether any men or women had been killed or hurt affected me little, for, with all the selfishness of youthful ambition, my very soul was filled with a longing to reach the Crimea without delay. This craving filled my mind at the moment to the exclusion of all other thought. It was a species of madness, but I was sane enough to feel that it was so, and to realize that it sprang from a personal longing for distinction, the outcome of an overwrought brain. I had brooded for months over the bad luck—which I exaggerated into the substance of an indignity—that whilst those in the Crimea were fighting for England I was left behind, condemned to lead a frivolous life in a home garrison. It is perhaps only a youthful mind constituted as mine was that can fully realize the misery, the sheer agony, I experienced during the autumn I spent in Dublin in 1854. The rebound of getting away at last was indescribable, and now, steaming fast towards the point round which all my thoughts centred, the world was bright, and, saving the dread of being too late, the cup of my joy was brimful.

From the mouth of the Bosphorus to Balaclava is about 280 miles, and the following day, the 3rd of December in

the forenoon, we sighted the old Venetian towers overhanging the land-locked little harbour of Balaclava, in the pool-like waters of which we were soon berthed. The whole coast on each side of the entrance was a mass of wreckage, the result of the great and disastrous storm of the 15th of the previous month, of which we had heard at Constantinople, As soon as we were moored, several old acquaintances of the Light Cavalry Brigade came on board. I remember thinking they were poor creatures, for they all said they meant to go home as soon as possible. One said: "Don't come near me; we are covered with vermin; it is a hateful place, and nothing would tempt me to remain here." How I despised that fellow, and felt he was unworthy to be called an Englishman. These officers (!) had every night in bed; they did no trench work, and being encamped near Balaclava, were able daily to buy wine and good food. They told us a great deal of the Balaclava Charge, where all had certainly fought well, and had nobly led their men straight; but yet they lacked the manliness to bear for any length of time the hardships and discomforts their men experienced daily! He must be a craven indeed, who, being well mounted, would not charge home at the head of his own men. It is not thus the noblest form of courage is made manifest, but in the daily endurance of cold and want.

The dirt of tent life in a very windy wet and dreary winter, such as that we spent in trench-work before Sebastopol, is not pleasant. The absence of every comfort to which all classes at home are accustomed tries the temper, and tests the metal we are made of. But the vast majority of us who did so spend that winter, would rather have died a hundred deaths in misery and want than have given in,

even at our worst epoch. When in subsequent years I met any poor hearted creatures who had sneaked on board ship, or to Scutari or to England on the plea of an extra pain in the stomach, I felt indignant at having to associate with officers who had so forfeited all claims to be regarded as gentlemen. How unworthy they were of the honour, the privilege, of commanding the British non-commissioned officer and private! But as my story goes on I shall have more to say of such unworthy fellows. How could they sleep at Scutari in clean sheets, or live at home with every comfort around them, knowing that the men of their own troops or companies were literally dying of want and misery before Sebastopol? During that winter we often lived on offal and garbage, but I am sure that none of us thought we were therefore objects of pity, or deserved praise on that account. Speaking for myself, all my sympathy was with the Rank and File; my heart was daily rent as I saw the privates die around me, because they had not the means of even buying the offal which my servant purchased weekly for himself and me from a friend who was a commissariat butcher. It is difficult, even after this lapse of time, to write in moderate terms of those commissioned creatures who, able to fight and work, crowded into our hospital ships, and, when they could do so, sneaked home to England, leaving others to do their duty. But what about that Civil Government of ours which sent an army to the Crimea without any means of carrying either food or wounded men! If the curses of brave men affect the future life of those who have injured them, many members of the Cabinet that sent us to the Crimea must now have uncomfortable quarters somewhere. And richly they deserve to be punished in the next world, for our Ministers

are never adequately punished in this life for their public crimes in such cases. Was there ever a greater public crime than that of sending our little army to the Crimea, where so many died of want and of the diseases which want always engenders ?

But we are told that it was done through ignorance. Ignorance, forsooth; and of what greater crime can a War Minister be convicted ? If he be ignorant, what right has he to fill a place and draw its emoluments when he lacks the knowledge required for the proper and useful discharge of its duties ? Yet this is still what we see ; a man who is not a soldier, and who is entirely ignorant of war, is selected solely for political reasons to be the Secretary of State for War. I might with quite as great propriety be selected to be the chief surgeon in a hospital. I have had some experience of wounds and operations, but those too often selected to be our Ministers of War know as much about war or soldiers as I do of abstruse theology. It is an infamous, a foolish system, and sooner or later it must land us in serious, if not in some disastrous, national calamity.

We were ordered to disembark at once, and encamp on the sloping ground to the north-west of the harbour—part of which, be it remarked, was an old graveyard ! We took leave of the captain and the chief officer of the *Europa*, to whom all ranks were most grateful for their unvarying kindness whilst we were on board. Each officer landed with his haversack full of tea, sugar, sardines, etc., etc., and whenever, subsequently, the *Europa* again came to the Crimea, a Southdown sheep or something good to eat was sent by her most generous and friendly captain as a present for the officers. In our turn, we presented him with a handsome gold watch as a memento of our successful

voyage, and of the care he took of the battalion when on board his ship.[1]

We landed in boats, and as I stepped ashore I was surprised to see, close to my feet, a Minié rifle lying half in and half out of the water. It gave me a shock, for I knew how valuable those arms were at the time; indeed, England possessed so few of them that we were sent to the Crimea with the old "Brown Bess" musket. It was to me mute evidence that all was not well with the soul, the spirit, of the Army in the field, and that already, to some extent, demoralization must have set in. Was it possible that our then rigid system of repressive discipline was unsuited to men under the strain of over-work with bad and insufficient food? Upon examining the rifle to see what regiment it belonged to, I found it was marked, "G. Company, 90th Light Infantry." That was the company to which I belonged. It was one of those issued to us early in the year, but given back shortly afterwards because required for the little army which our Cabinet had, with a light heart, sent to fight the great military power of Russia! There were not enough rifles in store to arm even that little force! When will the civilians who rule England understand the absurdity of keeping on foot a small standing army, for which all the arms and military stores it would require in the field are not always available for issue?

As soon as we were established in camp, kitchens made and fires lit, the great interest was to take stock of our nearest enemy, and through our glasses examine his position. General Liprandi then commanded the Russian force, occupying the Fiducan Heights, and the line of low hills

[1] My battalion, when landed, numbered twenty-nine officers and 814 N. C. officers and privates.

from which the Turks had been beaten on October 25. In fact, he held the line of the Tchernaya River, having an advanced force pushed across it, with the apparent intention of threatening our base of supplies at Balaclava. If driven from that little harbour, we should have had to fall back upon the French base at Kamiesch, which could not be attacked until the allied navies had been destroyed. Balaclava was far from strong, though the Highland Brigade, under the splendid old soldier Sir Colin Campbell, was strongly posted on the heights to the east of the harbour. From his position there was a fine clear view over the plain between the Tchernaya and Balaclava. He was not a man to be caught napping, and had strengthened his position with redoubts, infantry parapets, and rifle shelters. H.M.S. *Sanspareille*, moored at the northern end of the harbour, commanded the direct line of approach from Liprandi's position to Balaclava. My battalion on the north-west of the harbour, with the guns of that man-of-war sweeping across our front, denied all access to the place from the village of Kadikoi, which was about a mile from us on the road leading to Sebastopol.

I bought a pony the day I landed, and the following morning, December 5, I started on him to have a look at Sebastopol. From Cathcart's Hill, just in front of the 4th Division Camp, I had a good view of the town, the harbour, the docks, and the forts protecting the place. Whilst engaged in examining all the many points of interest through my telescope, two Russian men-of-war, the *Vladimir* and another—whose name I don't remember—steamed out of the harbour, and, turning south, took up a position that enabled them to enfilade the French parallels, whose left more or less rested on the sea there. She poured a steady

fire of shot and shell into the French works and approaches, evidently keeping a good look out upon our fleet in the offing. Our admiral was unprepared for any such gallant audacity on the part of his naval enemy, for none of his ships had steam up, and before a couple of them could be got under weigh the Russian had ample time to hammer well the left of the French siege works. It was a remarkably pretty sight, and we all applauded the enemy's daring and swagger, and had a good laugh at the expense of our admiral, who had been thus caught napping. As soon as a couple of our ships were able to steam in the direction of the enterprising Russian, she paddled back slowly, and almost insultingly, to her moorings in the harbour, Forts Constantine and Alexander opening fire upon our foremost steamer, H.M.S. *Sampson*, to cover their retreat. I had taken my sketch book with me, and one of the few Crimean drawings I still possess is that which I made of this affair. Cathcart's Hill was even then tolerably full of our dead, and I was shown the graves of many gallant leaders who had fallen at Inkerman, the battle where we were surprised, and our army only saved from destruction by the timely arrival of French troops to help us. Good heavens! What generals then had charge of England's only army, and of her honour and fighting reputation! They were served to a large extent by incompetent staff officers as useless as themselves; many of them merely *flâneurs* "about town," who knew as little of war and its science as they did of the Differential Calculus! Almost all our officers at that time were uneducated as soldiers, and many of those placed upon the staff of the Army at the beginning of the war were absolutely unfit for positions they had secured through family or political interest. There were, of course, a few

brilliant exceptions, but they made the incompetence of the many all the more remarkable.

After a few days' sojourn in camp at Balaclava, my battalion was sent to join the 2nd Brigade of the Light Division. A very muddy march took us to our destination. We encamped to the east of the Woronzoff Road, behind the old "Picket House," and sufficiently far down the reverse slope of the rising ground on which it stood to screen us from the enemy's observation. Our camp was nearly a mile and a half in rear of our first parallel, and about two miles and a quarter from the Salient of the Redan The ground where we pitched our tents was very rocky, and we had some difficulty in driving home our tent-pegs, and in making the usual small trenches required round each tent. There were three officers with each company, the captain and his two subalterns, all of whom occupied one tent.

CHAPTER V

The Crimea—My First Night on Outlying Picket there, 1854

IT is not my intention to enter upon any history of the Siege of Sebastopol, the most important, the most curious of all such operations in modern times. Sufficient to say, that as I read the story of our invasion of the Crimea by the two allied armies, I am astonished at the reckless folly with which it was undertaken. The Emperor Napoleon III had enough soldiers to enable him to retrieve the great mistake then made in sending too small an army there: we had not. The consequence was that the French were able to end the war in triumph and with credit; whereas at the end of the war our battalions carried with them into the remotest provinces of the Empire where we maintain garrisons, the sad story of failure for which the British Ministers, not the British soldiers, were directly responsible. The Government in office had given our small army a task far beyond its power to accomplish. In olden times, when a British general failed in the field our practice was to remove him, and now we hear that in future he is to be tried by court martial. But since the days when we first adopted the system of responsible Ministers, we have never yet hanged, nor even tried, the Minister whose folly or stupidity led him to declare war when our Army

was not fit to take the field. Most certainly the military force maintained by England when her Ministers declared war with Russia in 1854 could in no sense be justly called an army at all. It was not a "going military machine," any more than a steam engine is whose boiler is kept in Halifax, its cylinder in China, and its other machinery distributed in bits wherever the map of the world is coloured red, and for which machine neither water nor coals nor oil nor repairing tools are kept at hand. Our soldiers were magnificent fighting material; no better have ever pulled a trigger in any war. But since 1815 the interests of what was styled "economy!" were more attended to than the military efficiency of our troops, which were kept in isolated garrisons at home and abroad. They were most carefully drilled for theatrical effect, but not taught the practice of war. It had been deemed by Ministers, who ranked economy before efficiency, a useless expense to maintain in peace even the skeleton of a transport service.

The essentially military and naval city of Sebastopol lies south of the magnificent harbour of that name. It stands on a high, square block of land about a mile and a half long, from north to south, and about a mile and a quarter wide. Its eastern half was fairly well covered with streets and houses when the allied armies sat down before it.

On the east, that block is bounded by the Dockyard Creek, and on the west by Quarantine Bay. It was naturally a very strong place, but with the exception of several heavily armed coast forts and batteries to command the harbour entrance, the only attempt at fortification towards the south on the land side was a sort of large Martello tower that stood on high ground, something over 300 feet above sea level, and about two and a half miles south of the har-

bour, and nearly the same distance east of the Dockyard Creek. This work was known as the Malakoff.

Sebastopol was naturally a strong place, and a number of heavily armed ships of war were anchored in the harbour, to assist with their fire in the event of a *coup de main* being attempted by us. Our fleet could not help the allied armies in any such enterprise, for the Russians had sunk a number of ships at the mouth of the harbour, leaving only a narrow passage close to Fort Alexander for their own steam war vessels to pass out and in.

Upon the highest ground to the immediate north of the harbour there was a large star fort with masonry reveted ditches. It was but a poor work, and might possibly have been taken by a *coup de main* had we not been compelled to make the flank march we did to the south of the city, in order to secure possession of Balaclava Harbour as the immediate base for our army during the coming siege of Sebastopol.

The ground occupied by the English and French armies lies to the south of Sebastopol, and is a high rocky plateau, shaped like an isosceles triangle. Its sides are washed by the sea, its base faces eastward, inland, whilst its apex, Cape Chersonese, is to the west. Its northern side, ten and a half miles long, is indented by great bays, some of which stretch over a mile inland. It joins the base where the river Tchernaya falls into the eastern extremity of Sebastopol Harbour. The southern side of this triangle, about a mile longer than the northern side, is one unbroken coastline of great, steep and storm-washed cliffs, and may be said to join the base at a point about a mile south of the little village of Karani. Those cliffs, however, run on to the Harbour of Balaclava. The base of this triangle,

the highest part of the plateau, and rising at certain points to a height of five and six hundred feet above the sea, is about eight and a half miles in length. It is of steep access from the east throughout its entire length, except at the "Col" and in its immediate vicinity, where the road from Balaclava to our camp ascends the plateau. The steep slopes that form this base abound in strong military positions, facing eastward, but we had then few staff officers who were either competent to select them or to report upon their defensive capabilities.[1]

Of this triangular plateau we took the eastern portion with the land-locked Harbour of Balaclava as our immediate base, the French taking the western and larger half, with the Bays of Kamiesch and Kazatch as their harbours. What may be described as the dividing line between the two armies on this plateau was the Picket Ravine, which extends upwards from the head of Dockyard Creek for about four miles in a southerly direction, and ends at its source in the farm round the house that was Lord Raglan's headquarters, and where he died, broken-hearted I always thought.

The captain of my company had taken a University

[1] Before the Crimean War began there were few incentives for officers to study their profession scientifically. The great bulk of the staff at home, and most of those who had been selected for staff work with the army sent to Turkey, were chosen for family reasons. However, that was soon changed, for they were found to be mostly incompetent for all practical work in the field. Clever educated professional soldiers took their places according as vacancies occurred. I knew the officers well who were, as late as the fall of Sebastopol, the quarter-master-generals of two of our five divisions, and they were not men whom I would have entrusted with a subaltern's picket in the field. Had they been private soldiers I don't think any colonel would have made them corporals.

degree. I do not know what he had learnt thereby, but I do know that he had learnt nothing of a soldier's duties in the field. His men disliked him very much, for he took no manner of interest in their welfare. He knew the names of his colour-sergeant and of his servant, but I doubt if he knew the names of many others. He had no sympathy with his men nor with their feelings, and of course they were well aware of the fact. He knew his drill well, for in a Light Infantry Regiment that was essential, but of tactics or outpost duties he had no knowledge whatever.

A few days after our arrival in camp the company I belonged to was in orders for picket duty in the Middle Ravine the following morning. I did not then know where that ravine was, but I subsequently came to know it well as that which divided the two brigades of the Light Division. It was a twenty-four hours' tour of duty, and I was the only one in the company who had ever been on outlying picket before an enemy.

We " turned out " the next morning between four and five a.m., when it was pitch dark, raining hard, and both raw and cold. In every aspect the weather was unpromising, and no one appreciated having to leave his blankets and the shelter his bell tent afforded. Our adjutant appeared on the parade ground to see us start. He was a curious fellow, unpopular with both officers and men, and at heart no soldier. He disliked war, because, with Frederick the Great's father, he thought it spoiled the soldier's appearance and his drill, and even relaxed discipline. But he loved picturesque costumes, and had made for himself from the bearskin covering to his holster-pipes a headdress resembling that in which Robinson Crusoe was usually shown in the illustrated books of my childhood.

He knew nothing of where the Middle Ravine picket was posted, so could give us no information for our guidance. At last, after waiting some little time, the Brigade Major appeared on the scene, if I may use such an expression, when no one could see much beyond his nose. It was amongst his duties to see the pickets furnished by his brigade duly posted; and as we were strangers just arrived in camp, and entirely ignorant of the localities about us, he should have either gone with us to this Middle Ravine, or found us a guide to take us there. But he too contented himself with giving us the vaguest description of how, as he put it, we "were certain to find it," and then, pointing into the dark in its supposed direction, he retreated from the rain to the shelter of his tent.

My reader, picture to yourself what your feelings would be if "turned out" very early on a cold raw morning, that was as dark as midnight, the rain falling heavily, and told to find your way to a distant point across a roadless Yorkshire moor, where there were no prominent landmarks, and no chance of meeting any one at such an hour from whom to ask the way. No moon and not a star to be seen that might possibly give you some indication of north and south, etc., and to feel you had to relieve a company expecting you, and that was naturally longing to get back to camp for some food and warmth after its twenty-four hours' tour of duty.

I have entered in some detail upon this story of my first picket before Sebastopol, because it illustrates the incompetence of a large proportion of those who had been selected for staff work at that early period of the Crimean War. A man at that epoch became known in his regiment as being "smart" if he could drill well, and had some knowledge

of "The Queen's Regulations" and of the "Interior Economy" of a regiment. I don't know what our brigade major knew, but he certainly did not evince any intimate acquaintance with the staff duties of his office.

We started, and my captain left the rest to me. I naturally assumed that all the ravines which drained that side of the plateau upon which we were encamped must run down to Sebastopol Harbour, and as it was said to be the first ravine we should encounter, we had only to trudge along it until we should stumble upon the picket we were in search of.

The heavy rain had converted this ravine into a water-course through which we floundered in silence. The distance seemed interminable, and at last we had begun to imagine we must have got into the wrong ravine, and might soon find ourselves prisoners in Sebastopol. The position was unpleasant, when suddenly I heard the tramp of men coming towards us. The idea at once occurred that if we were on the wrong track this might possibly be a Russian patrol. I made my captain "front form" towards the supposed enemy, whilst I went forward with a file of men and challenged: "Who goes there?" A voice from the darkness answered in the richest of Tipperary brogues, "friend." It turned out to be half the company of the Connaught Rangers that formed the picket we were in search of. Its captain, tired of waiting for his relief, had upon his own authority sent home to camp half of his men, in order to have hot tea ready for the arrival of the other half. It was a dangerous thing to do, for as we were newcomers, left to find the Middle Ravine picket as best we might, it was quite on the cards we might have saluted our friends in the dark with a volley. Besides, daybreak

was the hour when outlying pickets require to be as strong as possible. But all our duties were slackly and badly performed then.

We found the captain of the old picket in no very amiable mood at the tardiness of our arrival, and he took little trouble to give us any information regarding the duties we were to undertake. He and his men bundled off as quickly as possible, showing us, as he started, a hole amongst some rocks in the side of the ravine, in which he said the officers stayed. My captain must have been some eight years older than I was, but he let me do as I liked. He knew nothing about picket duties, and troubled himself little on the subject. This suited me in every way, and notwithstanding the rain and the discomfort, I found the duty and responsibility of the position quite after my own heart.

Although the Russians had houses to live in and plenty of firewood, still they too succumbed to the influence of the horrible wet and cold weather, and were not keen for night attacks whilst it lasted. They too must have suffered, though not a tithe of what we did. So carelessly was our outpost duty performed during the first winter, that our immunity from attack was not so much due to the precautions we took against surprise as to the badness of the weather, which prevented the Russians from attacking us. There was also the fact that we had taught them so severe a lesson upon the morning of Inkerman, about a month before; they were not over anxious to cross bayonets with us so soon again. It rained upon us most of the day. Here and there time and running water had scooped out shallow open caves in the soft limestone rock which formed the sides of this Middle Ravine and of all the other ravines which ran down from our camps on the high plateau to the

Harbour of Sebastopol. These afforded a little shelter, and in the best of them my unsoldierlike captain ensconced himself for his tour of duty, letting the men shift for themselves as best they could. I was left to make what arrangements I liked for the protection of the post, and to guard it against surprise. I enjoyed these responsibilities, for they gave me a feeling of importance. But what a bad example his conduct would have been to an ignorant young subaltern, and how bad it was for the non-commissioned officers! All ranks in the company despised him as being no soldier.

During the day we collected what roots and brushwood we could to cook the men's dinner, and to provide us with some little fire during the long evening and night to follow. But it poured with rain at times, and the men, badly fed, were silent and depressed. A good glass of grog all round at dinner hour, however, did them much good. My dear good total abstainer, you would have thought so too had you been there. I think we had another "tot" with hot water and sugar about tattoo. Personally, I spent most of the night in visiting our sentries, and in peering from their posts into the heavy wet obscurity beyond, listening for any sound in front of feet splashing in the mud and running water of the ravine that stretched towards the enemy's position. We stood to our arms next morning sometime before daybreak and until our relief arrived, not quitting the position until it was broad daylight. This is the absolute rule upon such occasions, though often neglected at that time before Sebastopol.

I have described this, my first night upon outlying picket in the Crimea, for it was typical of the careless and ignorant manner in which our staff work was done by the uneducated, and too often the useless, officers at first selected for staff

positions, and also of the manner in which our outpost duty was mostly performed throughout the winter of 1854–5. It was not our rank and file who were the worst in this respect, for they had been well taught obedience, the first and most important duty of a soldier; it was our officers of all degrees who were generally ignorant of their work, and the most striking examples of military ignorance were the great majority of those who had been selected to be our generals and our brigadiers and for the staff of the Army generally. A large proportion of these were taken from the Foot Guards, who had not then even the advantage of knowing what our Army was like outside of St. James' and Windsor. All were gallant daring fellows, who looked well after their men, and never spared themselves in any way in doing so. They were the very best material of which officers could possibly be made, and on active service always showed themselves most anxious to learn their duty, and never shrank from any amount of hard work. It was not their fault that they did not know their duty as officers when they embarked for Turkey; it was the fault of the wretched system under which they lived nominally as soldiers, but never in barracks with their men, and having but little personal contact with them. All that is changed now. All corps in our Army were vastly improved by their service in the Crimea, but to none did it give such an entirely new life as to all ranks in the battalions which constituted the Brigade of Guards in that war.

CHAPTER VI

My First Day's Duty in the Trenches, 1854

MY first tour of trench duty was by day, and I enjoyed it thoroughly. Full of fight and with a fair theoretical knowledge of "attack and defence," and of the besieger's art generally, the whole thing was delightful. I felt I had studied fortification to some useful purpose. My fellow subaltern was clever, a great reader, fond of the classics; he used at Eton to write Latin verses for his chums, of whom some were in our battalion. He was quite cool, but had no keenness for his profession. Although we were the only battalion in the right attack armed with Brown Bess, we were sent into what was then the most advanced trench and subsequently became our third parallel. Just in front of it was a spring of good water, round which we had thrown up a parapet to screen our men who went there to fill their calabashes. I was close to it all the day, and not more than about a couple of hundred yards off were some Russian rifle pits. From them came a bullet whenever a man showed himself above the parapet, and I amused myself putting a forage cap on a ramrod to see how near the bullet came to it. Then I made one of the men do it whilst I stood at a neighbouring loophole with a cocked musket laid upon the spot from which the last Russian shot had been

fired. As soon as I saw the puff of smoke from the hostile loophole I let drive at it. I carried on this little game for a long time with intense interest and amusement, until at last, bang came in a round shot followed by two or three shell. I flattered myself that I had stung the Russian bear, and that having killed or wounded some of the riflemen in front of me, they had thus opened fire upon us to keep us quiet. At this juncture, an officer arrived on the scene, having been sent by the field officer of the day from the Twenty-one gun Battery in rear to know "what all the firing was about?" When the facts were reported I received an order to "shut up" and not thus draw fire uselessly upon us. Afterwards throughout the siege, whenever I was idle during a day's tour of duty, I went into the advanced works and amused myself in the way I had done during my first day's experience of trench duty. I may not have killed a large number, not even one, but I at least made the enemy realize that we were keen and lighthearted and always ready to engage in such duels. It served to keep alive the same spirit amongst our men.

Throughout the whole siege, according to my views at the time, and as I still think, the one great desire on the part of the field officer of the day was if possible to keep things quiet during his twelve hours' duty in the trenches. This wish was certainly far too pronounced, and often too evident. In some respects it was doubtless a wise policy, for the Russians with a great arsenal behind them could at all times afford to fire three shells or round shot to our one. There was no stint of guns or ammunition in Sebastopol, judging from the piles of both we found in the place when it fell. But the case

was very different with us. Not only had all our guns, powder, shot and shell to come by sea to Balaclava, but to be dragged up from there to our trenches some eight miles distant, and our Cabinet had not provided us with transport of any sort. It was therefore very necessary to economize even our musket ammunition. But there was a limit to that policy, and I think our field officers and our generals exceeded that limit. Any little show of timidity, no matter how insignificant in itself, damps the spirits of your own men and cannot fail to encourage the enemy.

During the month of December the weather was fine though cold. If we had been well fed we should have done well, but we never had enough to eat, and what we had was never appetizing. Before the beginning of the new year, when we might have shown some energy and vigour and thrown some amount of enterprise into our "attack," there was an entire absence of it, and we had already begun to act upon the defensive. The rôle of besieger and besieged was already reversed, and we tamely sat down under it. After Christmas no other policy was open to us, and if the Russians had thoroughly understood our real condition then, they might with ease have driven us from the right—the important attack—spiked our guns, blown up our trench magazines, and retired in safety by the Middle Ravine and Mamelon-Vert. If we lacked energy they lacked it all the more, and with much less excuse; for their men were not exposed in tents as we were, and had plenty of food and an abundance of firewood to cook it with.

I returned to camp that evening in every way satisfied with my first day in the trenches, which I can honestly

say I thoroughly enjoyed. Indeed, I may add, every day that I subsequently spent in our siege works afforded me intense pleasure.

Christmas Day was at hand, and all were anxious to have, if possible, a plum pudding and something better than usual for dinner that day. My brother subaltern and I managed to buy at Balaclava a box of figs, a few pounds of very rancid suet or grease of some sort. No raisins or currants were to be had, nor could we obtain any flour. We thought that cut-up figs would suitably represent the plums, and that pounded-up biscuit would be a fair substitute for the flour. A Russian round shot and a large section of an exploded thirteen inch shell answered well as a pestle and mortar to pulverize the ship's biscuits. I was then and always have been the most feeble and useless of cooks. In the first place I hated cooking of all sorts, and to attempt it when there was any meat to be cut up or otherwise manipulated was repulsive to me. Even in the backwoods of Canada, I shrank from bleeding the deer I shot, and could neither "clean" fish nor cut up nor prepare any flesh for dinner. The sight of raw meat even to this day gives me nausea, and to pass a butcher's shop is always a trial. But to attempt to make a plum pudding was an amusement, and I was both greedy and hungry for a good "blow-out," to relieve the monotony of salt pork and, still worse, of red navy salt junk.

We two subalterns made a horrible looking mess of the materials I have described, and it was in no sense an appetizing looking dish. But after hours of work over it, the question of how a plum pudding was cooked occurred, and neither of us had any clear notions on the subject. We went as a deputation to our dear old Quarter-Master,

a fine fellow in every respect. He had lately been our sergeant-major and commanded the respect of all ranks. He seemed to pity our foolish ignorance, and said it should be boiled, and boiled for several hours, describing how it should be tied up in a napkin before being put into the pot. I sacrificed one of my very few towels for the purpose, and we both felt much relieved when we saw the pot containing this unsavoury mess put upon the fire in charge of a servant, who was told to watch and tend it carefully. I dawdled about the camp, looking forward to a better dinner than usual and to a night in bed, for "G Company" was not for the trenches until the following morning. It was about 3 p.m. that an orderly sergeant arrived with the company order book, from which I learnt that we were unexpectedly required for the trenches that evening. What was to be done with the plum pudding? Our captain didn't care for it, although he swore as our men did in Flanders at his bad luck in having to be on duty all night. As we, his two subalterns, were at the moment both hungry, this question of the plum pudding was a serious matter: should we eat it in its half-boiled state or keep it for the following day? The ensign was for the latter, I in my greed and hunger voted for eating it at once, and I carried the day. We had to eat our dinner, plum pudding included, in a great hurry to be in time for the "fall in." It was hard to chew that pudding, and I only ate a little of it. Having marched down to the trenches, our company was told off for the Twenty-one gun Battery, which then mainly constituted the first parallel of the right attack. Our delightfully Irish assistant-surgeon, dear old Jackson, now Sir Robert Jackson, the cheeriest and best of comrades and least complaining of

men, was on duty with us. It was the first time I had had the luck to be told off for so safe, so comfortable a part of our siege works during any tour of trench duty, and I looked forward to a quiet night. We furnished no working parties, and we were quite safe, being covered by another parallel where the trench guard had to be on the alert all night. No firing was going on anywhere. It was fine but very cold, and with the exception of a few sentries here and there to keep a look-out, most of the men sat or lay about, and slept as best they could. It must have been about 10 p.m. when I began to feel uncomfortable, and very soon a pain set in that actually bent me double. I imagined I could feel, if not actually hear, each piece I had swallowed of that infernal pudding rattling in my stomach, as one might expect shot to rattle if one had swallowed a round of canister. The pain was intense; I was helpless and felt, as the Americans say, "real sick." I stood it for some time, my dear friend Doctor Jackson could do nothing for me; he said he could be of no use, for he had no brandy or physic of any sort to give me, and that I must go back to camp and get into bed. Go back I had to, and the doctor said he would go with me. He said he might be of use to me on the way to camp, and could be of none to any one in the trenches. So off we started, I being still in great pain. The night was cold and we walked very fast, both anxious to get under the blankets in our respective tents. About a quarter of an hour's sharp walking drove away my pain, and I suddenly found myself as well as ever I was. I stopped and said I would go back. My companion advised me as a doctor not to do so: as a soldier I replied I must go back. He then appealed to me as a friend to go to camp

with him as he was of no use in the trenches. I said, "Oh! go home therefore by all means, but back to the trenches I must return." "How can I go back by myself?" he answered, "I have no sword nor pistol, and my only weapon of defence is my empty soda-water bottle. I dare not face those wild dogs on the road with it only." But I was obdurate, and he, in an extremely cross humour, had to follow me back to where I had so recently left my company. This best of comrades has since then been with me in many campaigns, and a braver man never lived. He was quite the sort of assistant surgeon one might read of in *Charles O'Malley*, full of fun and of Irish humour. In after years, when an old man, he married. I was then commanding the forces in Ireland, and he came to tell me his wife was going to have a baby. I said jokingly to him, "You ought to be tried by court-martial": he replied, "Bedad! I think I ought to be given the Victoria Cross!"

I had never before attempted to make a plum pudding—need I add, that I never tried again!

About this time my friend, Captain Barnston, was made Deputy-Assistant-Quarter-Master General at Army Head Quarters. It was a right good selection, for he had graduated at the Senior Department, and all round he was by far the best and ablest officer in our battalion. Unlike nearly all our other captains he was ambitious, and wished to rise in his profession. He had previously been asked to serve as an Assistant Engineer, but had wisely refused, for with his qualifications he was bound sooner or later to be selected for the staff of the Army. He advised me to apply for an appointment of assistant engineer which he had refused. I did so, and it was given to me. My

brother officers were very angry, because in their eyes to leave the regiment was a crime. That was the common feeling then in most corps towards men who forsook regimental for staff work. They were looked upon as men who sought to exchange hard and dangerous trench duty for some safe and easy billet, with every night "in bed." I was extremely glad to obtain this opening, which in no degree removed me from trench work, and was bound to afford me opportunities for distinction and for coming to know those who ruled the army in the Crimea.

The engineers hated having to obtain assistants from the Line, but were obliged to do so because they had not enough officers to do their own work. Looking back at my service with the engineers, I feel that I owe no debt of gratitude to that corps. They regarded us as interlopers, and kept the rewards for trench service to themselves as much as possible.

CHAPTER VII

Service in the Trenches as Assistant Engineer

I JOINED the Engineer Camp the first week of January, 1855, and my first day's duty as an Engineer was the 4th of that month. The officer on duty with me was Lieutenant Pratt, R.E. It was a very cold day, with some rain, and a searching wind blew. I had a good overcoat, so kept fairly warm, but Pratt was very badly clad. I forget how it came about, but when on duty near the Danube before the army went to the Crimea he had lost all his kit, and had afterwards to pick up clothes as best he could. He was of a most uncomplaining disposition, and want and discomfort sat lightly upon him ; nor did he exert himself on his own behalf, as he might have done, in all such matters. He did not care how he fared as regarded food as long as he had a pipe to smoke and enough tobacco to put into it. Upon this occasion, his body was wrapped in a brown Turkish Grego that was tied round his waist by a cord or leathern strap, and whose hood protected his head well from the cold blast that came to us from the bleak Steppes beyond the Don. He had no gloves, but a pair of very coarse woollen socks supplied their place, and his feet were clad in the rough ammunition boot of the private soldier. He had all the contentment but none of the light-heartedness of Mr. Mark Tapley.

The only work done during my twelve hours of duty was to clear the drains in the third parallel and to relay some of the gun platform sleepers in "Gordon's Battery." But, as a matter of fact, we did nothing in our trenches during the winter of 1854–5 beyond feeble efforts made to keep them free from water.

Amongst the Assistant Engineers at that time was Lieutenant, now General Sir Henry Green, of Jacob's Scind Horse, an excellent soldier of the first class, and a cheery comrade. He belonged to a fighting family and maintained its credit throughout the Crimean War. I am proud to have the privilege of counting him amongst my old soldier friends. He had been educated and taught his work by that most remarkable man, General Jacob, who amongst the many brilliant leaders the Indian army has given our Empire, was one of its ablest soldiers and one of its greatest administrators.

The Royal Engineer camp of the right attack was on the western side of the Careening Creek Ravine, just above the watering-place and near the windmill which stood to the east of it. Upon reporting myself there to the commanding Royal Engineer on the last day of 1854, I was ordered to share the tent occupied by Captain Vacher, of the Duke of Wellington's regiment, who was an assistant engineer and a graduate of the Senior Department. He was a demure old-maidish sort of man, who thought much of his health, but he was a thoroughly good-hearted fellow all the same, and upon further acquaintance I came to appreciate him as a friend. He was a most conscientious worker, and very methodical in all he did. He had joined the engineers before the Battle of Inkerman and had consequently been two months already doing duty as an

engineer, when I became his tent companion. He gave me much useful information as to the nature of our trench work and of the engineer officers I should have to deal with. In disposition he was my opposite, not caring for horses, nor for sport, nor for active games of any sort. His real place was in an office, and when subsequently serving in the quarter-master-general's office proved himself invaluable in keeping its records and correspondence in the best possible order. In fact, he preferred sedentary work to out-of-door employment.

Before I took up my abode in his tent, he had been for one or two nights with a party of sappers in the Tchernaya Valley, engaged, I think, in destroying the wooden bridge by which the Waronzoff road crossed the river near Sebastopol Harbour. He brought back from this expedition a Russian wooden wheelbarrow and some stout planks. The latter served to keep his bed off the ground, a great advantage in our very muddy camp, and the former was used, bit by bit, as firewood in the worst weather, when nothing else that was burnable could be found as fuel. It disappeared gradually, until only the iron axle and tyre of the wheel remained. Then came a dreadful day when we found ourselves with no fuel of any sort to cook our food with. We both looked wistfully at the above-mentioned four planks that formed his bed. I said nothing: there was a dead silence in the tent, at the door of which stood our two servants, who asked us what was to be done, whilst their eyes were fixed upon the planks. With a sigh, Vacher condemned one to the flames, and it supplied us all with the means of cooking for many days. Shortly afterwards the weather became still more horrible, our camps were ankle deep in mud and slush, and it

snowed and rained in turns all day and night. The world around wore an aspect of absolute wretchedness. Our men looked worn and hungry, and our poor dumb, half-starved ponies stood with their backs to the cold north wind, the very picture of silent misery. I was lying on the floor of our tent with great coat on, and every article of clothing I possessed either upon my body or under my head as a pillow, when my servant with a drawn hungry look upon his face appeared, and announced that he had burned the last splinter of the above-mentioned plank that morning to make our tea, and that no firewood of any sort was to be had anywhere. There were the three remaining planks, but their owner, Vacher, was in the trenches and they constituted his bedstead. What was to be done? He would require hot food of some sort when he returned from the trenches, but then, ought I without his permission to rob him of a plank, and so leave him with only two to sleep on? If not actually a point of law, it was at least a nice question. But I salved my conscience by the mental assurance that had they constituted my own bed I would certainly sacrifice one of them to the immediate and very pressing necessity of the moment. I said therefore to my servant, "Take one," as I pointed to Vacher's bed. I confess that my conscience pricked me as I did so, and I felt as if I had committed a serious crime. My chum returned late and in a very hungry condition from the trenches. It had snowed all the day during his tour of duty, and had continued to do so all the way back to camp. He looked somewhat disconsolate and much down on his luck. As he charged into dry clothes, I saw he had become conscious that he must sleep that night upon two planks only, but he said

nothing, and I lacked the courage to tell him what I had done. I ought to add in self-justification that I had no bedstead or planks to sleep on myself, or I should have burnt them before I burnt my chum's. I slept on a waterproof sheet with a place hollowed out for my hip beneath it. But, thank Heaven. I have always had the inestimable faculty of sleeping at all hours of the day or night, and under even the most sleep-killing circumstances. We had little conversation that evening, and I re-read my last home letters and scraps of some old newspapers in the dim light of a very bad candle. I could have it in any position near where I lay, for my candlestick was a Russian bayonet picked up on the battlefield of Inkerman. It required no table, for I stuck it in the damp floor of the tent wherever I found the light shone best. That night, I fully realized the truth of Sancho Panza's saying; that "sleep covers you up like a cloak."

Captain Vacher was soon selected for the quarter-master-general's staff, and left me for Army Head Quarters. I cannot say with "bag and baggage," but I may truthfully say with all his baggage in one bag.

My second chum in the engineer camp was a lieutenant of the 64th Regiment, a most genial Irishman named Sheehy. He spoke with a Cork brogue and was a fine specimen of the brave race to which he belonged. He was an ugly-looking fellow without a moustache, with prominent eyes whose pupils were very small; but he was blessed with a laughing face and a comical expression, and the lightest of cheerful, honest hearts. The best of friends, of fellows and of comrades, indifferent to danger of all sorts, and a good rider, he was an amusing contrast morally and physically to my staid companion whose place

he took in the tent. His regiment was in India, but he had come to the Crimea on the chance of finding something to do, he did not care what, as long as he could see some fighting. The day after he landed he walked to the trenches, where he soon lost his way. He wore an oil-skin cover over his forage cap, so that without asking him who he was, or examining the buttons of his shell jacket, one could not discover the regiment he belonged to. As soon as he asked an officer to point out the road to camp he attracted attention, and aroused mistrust. We had recently grown suspicious of strangers, so he was asked his name and regiment. His name was not, I believe, uncommon in certain parts of Ireland, but when he said he belonged to the 64th Regiment, which did not form part of the Crimean army, misgivings on the part of all present fell upon him at once. General Codrington was in the trenches at the time, to whom the matter was referred. The most polite and charming of polished gentlemen he listened to Sheehy's story, and then, with many apologies, said he must ask that he should accompany him to camp. Sheehy strode away on his long legs beside the general's well known grey pony, and they had a pleasant talk. I think Sheehy had done one term with the Senior Department, and was thus able to converse easily on military subjects. He was fortunately able to find a man in camp who had been there with him. In a few days he was appointed an assistant engineer in the right attack, and though he knew nothing about the work he was useful under those who did. He was told off to share my tent, and we soon became great friends, for no more genial comrade could be found. Peace be to the ashes of this loyal Irish Catholic, the firmest of friends, the most

daring and enthusiastic of soldiers. He died of fever on the road to Cawnpore early in the Great Mutiny, having joined some irregular cavalry corps in the hope of getting to the front. When in Oudh, I received a letter of an old date from him some considerable time after I had heard of his death. In it he advised me to join the regiment he was serving with, as he said, "it was sure to have plenty of fighting." Would that every man who then held the Queen's commission was as enthusiastic a soldier, as indifferent to danger and as careless of his own life as that gallant soul was.

As a rule the engineer officer's ordinary tour of duty meant a day or a night mostly spent in that part of the trenches which was nearest to the enemy. During the winter months we made no progress with our siege works at all, and were only too glad to keep our batteries and parallels tolerably clear of snow, mud and water. But the fact that we spent our day or night on duty as close as possible to the Russian works made our employment more dangerous than if we were doing duty with a regiment, the infantry trench guard being distributed throughout the works generally, including many spots where one ran little or no risk from shot or shell. The artillery remained in their batteries which, being at that time exclusively in the first parallel, were always safe from sorties, being well protected by the infantry guard of the second parallel. During the night there could be no artillery fire upon them, and as the artillery neither made their batteries nor kept them in repair, their nights during the winter were spent in safety, and when possible in sleep. Of course the same remark applies also to the naval brigade who worked the guns in some of the batteries of our first

parallel. The serious time for the gunner, whether of the Royal Artillery or Royal Navy, was during the "bombardments," when both always lost heavily. At other times they had an easy life of it throughout the siege, much easier than the infantry, and still more so than the engineers, as all our boyaux, batteries and other works were made between sunset and sunrise the following morning. The night was the dangerous time for sorties, but none ever penetrated as far as our first parallel. During the winter there was but very little firing from either side. We were all too busy in trying to keep our works and trenches fairly drained, no easy matter in the snow and rain of that season.

I recall many events of my eight months' constant trench work with much pleasure. I was on duty the day Lord Raglan brought General de la Marmora to visit our right attack, through which I guided them. The Sardinian general had a charmingly genial manner, and from the questions he asked me, I soon discovered he had a good knowledge of fortification, and understood the besieger's art well. So very few of our generals then knew anything of such matters, and indeed of anything belonging to their profession beyond barrack-yard drill, that it was a rare, a pleasant event to meet with an educated commander like La Marmora. He spoke English, and struck me as being all that one expects a well-born English gentleman to be. Like Lord Raglan, he had much of the refined and stately manner of the old school about him, and with all that courtesy of deportment so rarely met with in these days of undue familiarity and of slipshod address. In fact, he was a sort of Italian replica of our own commander, and both men looked soldiers all over.

There was nothing but desultory firing going on whilst

they were in the trenches, but one gun-shell struck the parapet of the third parallel in front of and very near us, and hopping over it, burst as it did so. I watched the faces of both closely at the moment, but neither was in the least degree disturbed by it.

In camp upon the evening of June 16, Major Campbell, of the Cornwall Light Infantry, then the 46th Regiment, Captain De Moleyns, R.E., and myself were discussing the prospects of the assault which we knew to be imminent. The width, and especially the depth, of the Redan ditch was a prominent point in our conversation, and we dwelt upon the fact that we knew little about the ground immediately in front of that work. We freely condemned our want of enterprise in such matters and the little encouragement that was given all ranks to undertake any examination of it. I don't remember by which of us the suggestion was made, but we three there and then decided to try our luck, and by crawling out on hands and knees to the abattis, and if possible through it to the edge of the ditch, to ascertain its dimensions. We provided ourselves each with a long string to plumb the depth of the ditch should any of us succeed in reaching it. We told no one in camp of our intentions, but about midnight were at our places in the most advanced parallel. I was in the centre and my companions one on each side at some fifty or more yards to my right and left. We took off our swords but each carried his revolver in hand, having agreed not to fire except in self-defence. We crawled quietly over the trench parapet, exposing ourselves as little as possible, having told the officers commanding companies in the vicinity of our intention, so that we might not be fired

upon by our own men. I soon lost sight of my fellow adventurers as I crawled along very slowly, and with the least possible noise. The night was by no means dark, though no moon was visible, but at times I held my breath as I peered around into the dark and listened for any sound, such even as the disturbance of a loose stone would give, but there was none. No voices were to be heard in front, and no Russian sentry to be seen upon the sky-line. "Where are their sentries?" I kept thinking. "Lying down," I assumed; but had they seen us? Were they watching, and perhaps inwardly chuckling at our folly and waiting like the spider in his corner to pounce suddenly upon us when well within their net? Forward I crept very slowly, bit by bit over the rocky ground well scored all over by our guns, and deeply pitted with shell holes, but covered here and there with reedy grass. The abattis was at last close in front, and I could see its weird branches at places against the sky-line. My pulse went quicker than usual; I imagined I could hear my heart beat, and at such moments lay prone to steady myself. I wanted three eyes, one to peer into the dark unknown in my immediate front, the others to watch to right and left where I knew my fellow travellers were engaged as I was.

At last, I heard a noise to one side of where I was slowly crawling forward, scanning the ground as I went with the utmost intentness. I saw upon the sky-line to one side of me a man suddenly stand up and run at full speed for our trenches. There was no sound of any voice, no noise but what he made in running, no other indication of any enemy being near, and no shot was fired. I knew it was one of my friends, and being quite sure that neither would bolt thus, except to escape capture, I felt certain he had

come upon some Russian group of outlying sentries. After a little halt, and seeing no other figure in any direction round me, I resumed my forward and very slow progress. As I recall the events of this unimportant and as it proved unsuccessful adventure, which could only have covered a small section of an hour, every minute it took from start to finish comes before me as if it had been an operation of some consequence, and had extended over some hours. To hurry the pace would have been to discover ourselves to the enemy, so I resumed my crawling, wriggling and very slow advance. Before long, I saw my remaining comrade run back also; I cannot say that after that I retained much hope of ever reaching the Redan counter-scarp, but I thought if possible I might get near it and so learn something of what the ground immediately in its front was like. "Nothing venture, nothing win," I thought, so after a sufficient pause I pushed forward again at a very slow and still more cautious pace. I began to think I was doing well, there being nothing to indicate the presence of any one in my immediate neighbourhood, when in the twinkling of an eye, up there popped upon the sky-line some two or three heads in front of me, and as far as I could judge not more than about ten paces off. My reader, what would you have done in such a position? I ran for my life in the most undignified fashion, and was soon safe, though breathless, in our advanced parallel. The only useful result of our unsuccessful venture was the assurance we gained that the Russians kept good watch and ward over the ground in their immediate front. All three rode back to camp in bad humour, disappointed in our hearts, and told no one what we had been about that midnight.

CHAPTER VIII

On Duty in the Trenches as an Engineer Officer, 1855

I HAVE often been asked what one did when a shell fell unpleasantly close. The safest thing to do is to fall flat until it bursts. This one always made "the travelling gentleman," and even the visitor from the cavalry camp do, when taking him round our siege works. It was a cruel amusement, for the terror of death generally possessed their souls until the infernal shell had burst. But we had extremely little to amuse us, and were often much bored by these sightseers. I have seen this little game played off upon a visitor even when no shell had fallen anywhere near, for the mere devilment-sake of seeing the effect it would have upon him. But the officers who were most accustomed to shell fire, such as the Engineers in the right attack, seldom took much trouble about their own bodies. Unless the offending shell had fallen disagreeably close, one stood and faced it, being well able to see and to dodge the great pieces into which it invariably burst. (I never picked up nor saw a very small splinter of any large mortar shell.) This, however, required the quickness of a practised eye. But, writing from my own experience of those with whom I was closely associated during the siege, we at last became too indifferent to all species of fire to take any

great special precautions against it. Perhaps it arose from a sort of callous laziness. As regards my own feelings, I don't think I ever expected to live through the siege after I had fully realized what were my duties as an Engineer officer in the right attack. When, as an Infantry officer, it was your day or night for duty in the trenches, it was quite a chance where you were sent to in them. Many parts of our siege works were safe when compared with others. I am sure, however, that when the captain of a company wished for a safe billet during his tour of duty, it was for the sake of his men and not in the interests of his own vile body. We all had an intense horror of losing our comrades in the ranks, the why and the wherefore it is not difficult to analyze, for every right-minded officer was deeply attached to them. But to look after his sappers was not the first consideration with the engineer officer: it was to push the siege forward, and consequently one never had a safe billet whilst on engineer duty in the trenches of our right attack. In nine out of every ten hours of duty, the engineer was in the post of greatest danger —the head of the sap or somewhere in the most advanced batteries was where his duties usually required him to be. During the bombardments he had general charge of some line of batteries, and he was responsible for keeping the embrasures in serviceable order. This was no child's play during daylight in any of our bombardments, for the moment a man appeared in an embrasure to repair it, the enemy's batteries bearing upon the battery at once concentrated their fire upon that embrasure.

There was one officer amongst us, Lieutenant Murray, afterwards killed, who was remarkable for his imperturbable coolness. Helping him upon one occasion during a bom-

bardment in repairing the cheek of an embrasure which the enemy's fire had just destroyed, another round shot entered the other cheek, and so covered him with its débris. The only notice he took of the occurrence was to shake the dust from the tails of his frock coat, whilst he went on with his work without a pause, as if the event was one of hourly occurrence and of no consequence. I never saw or heard of an engineer officer asking a private to undertake any service of danger in which he did not himself take more than his fair share. In connexion with the repair of our batteries whilst a bombardment was in full swing, I was one day at work mending an embrasure with some one else, I forget whom. I was in the act of raising the sandbag revetment over the gabions in an embrasure with a handspike as a lever in order to enable my friend to insert a filled sandbag, when a round shot tore through that cheek of the embrasure. In a second I found myself sprawling on the gun-platform within the embrasure, whilst the handspike I had been using, sent flying with considerable impetus, struck a man's leg, bowling him over also and hurting him seriously.

The engineer officers who were recent arrivals from England often entered the trenches for the first time with very high and mighty notions regarding their superior knowledge as to how the engineer work should be done. I was one evening detailed for duty with a captain of that corps just from Chatham. We were to mark out the emplacement for a new battery, and he was anxious to begin before the darkness of night had shrouded us from view. I persuaded him to wait. He did so for some time, but at last, impatient to be at work, he would brook no longer delay, and, scoffing at all danger from hostile riflemen,

and against my advice, he insisted upon beginning. We had not proceeded more than a few paces from the friendly cover of a parallel, when a volley of rifle bullets was poured amongst us from some neighbouring rifle pits. One bullet went through the stiff top of my light infantry forage cap, and another through my short loose coat from one side to the other, uncomfortably near my backbone. My energetic but obstinate R.E. captain—as indeed we all did —bustled rapidly back in a very undignified fashion to the shelter of the trench we had just foolishly left. Not long afterwards he was badly wounded, and I think lost a leg.

I often saw horrible wounds inflicted, when men were literally torn in pieces by shot and shell. I think it was during the second or third bombardment that I was one day in charge of No. 14 battery of six or eight guns, in our second parallel, which I had taken part in building not long before. It was, I think, the only battery that had been constructed in one night during the siege. This achievement was accomplished by preparing in the neighbouring boyaux during many days and nights before the enormous amount of filled sandbags it would take to complete a battery of the size required. With these filled sandbags the battery was, I may say, entirely built during one night, and when day broke, great must have been the astonishment of the Russians at its sudden mushroom growth. In the next bombardment it received special attention from the enemy's guns, until at last some two or three merlons—that part of the parapet between every two guns—were razed level with the soles of the embrasures. The enemy thereupon turned more guns upon that part of it, as the gunners there were fully exposed from the hips upwards. In the space of a few minutes one of their shot

cut a gunner in two, without, I suppose, hitting the spinal cord. The result was that the arms of the trunk kept moving about as if the poor fellow was in the most terrible agony. It was a ghastly, an uncanny sight. The artillery captain in command, a real good man, dazed, like myself, by the horror of the spectacle, said excitedly, "What shall I do? Shall I put him out of pain?" But before a doctor could be found the poor fellow had ceased to move. I shudder as I now, in cold blood, think of that awful occurrence; but the doctor, when he arrived, said that although he was able to fling his arms wildly about for what seemed to those standing by as a horribly long time, the helpless sufferer must already have lost all power of feeling.

I must not quit the subject of this quickly built sandbag battery without mentioning that when the mode of its construction became known at the headquarters of the Royal Engineers in the Crimea, an angry "minute" was communicated to those responsible for it. Attention was called to the fact that sandbags were scarce and valuable —I believe the Black Sea fleet was then supplying them in large quantities—and that we had expended upon this one battery alone more of them than had been used in Lord Wellington's siege of Burgos! Few of us cared how much they cost the country, for we knew how far their use upon the occasion complained of had gone towards the saving of life. We all felt sure that had the Duke of Wellington been alive then, he would have been the first to approve of the plan adopted for building the battery in question. But Red Tape is a terrible disease.

Our sailors who served the guns in the Twenty-one Gun Battery—commonly known as "Gordon's Battery"—were

wont to describe in very matter-of-fact words the most horrible events of a "*hot day*" there. A comrade of mine, an assistant engineer, told me as follows. He was in that battery during one of our bombardments when the blue-jacket relief arrived, and overheard one sailor ask another where his messmate "Bill" was. The answer, given in the deep conventional "lower-deck" voice, was: "Bill? Why, there's his bloody pipe and there's his bloody liver." Poor Bill had been knocked to pieces by a shell during the day.

What splendid gunners they were! always cheery and always ready to lend a hand in any job, and that "hand" was sure to mean effective help. Their leader, Captain Sir William Peel, was in many ways one of the most remarkable men I ever served with. We often met on duty in the twenty-one gun battery, almost all the guns in which were served by the Navy. One day, in fairly quiet times, I was walking in it with him up and down in true quarter-deck fashion, when we both heard the peculiar "pitch-ata-wich-ata" noise in the air which bespoke the near approach of a large mortar-shell. We stopped to watch it, and to our horror saw it fall immediately in front of us upon the entrance to one of our largest powder magazines, and not five paces off; the shell burst as it did so. Strange as it may seem, I well remember how amused I was at the moment by the sudden harlequin head-over-heels fashion in which the magazine-man came rolling out into the battery from the smoking ruins. The sandbags and apparently the passage timbers had been set on fire, and in an instant a volume of smoke, laden with dust from the explosion issued from the interior. It was an appalling moment, and it must have seemed the end of this world to any of us

who still retained the power to reason at all. We were not actually dead, but horror had for the second of time, as it were, killed our thinking faculties. We were face to face with death, immediate death. I have often rubbed shoulders with that mocking monster, but I may without boasting say that upon no other occasion which I can remember has he ever "cow'd my better part of man." But Peel was "all there," for in much less time than it takes me to tell this story, I saw him dive into the smoking magazine. This action on his part made men of us all in an instant, and it was not long before every spark of fire there had been well trampled out. I do not know, I cannot tell from experience, whether courage or cowardice is the more quickly contagious. But this I do know, that of all horrible sights, that of a man in action who exhibits a want of nerve and daring is the worst. Thank heaven, it is a disease from the effects of which the British gentleman does not require any sort of inoculation to preserve him.

One evening about the middle of March, 1855, I started from the Royal Engineer camp for night duty in the trenches. I rode as far as the Middle Ravine picket, and walked up the trench leading from it to the right of "Gordon's" or "the twenty-one gun battery." There I met Captain Craigie, R.E., awaiting my arrival to relieve him, as he had been in the trenches throughout the day, and I was to relieve him and be on duty until the following morning. He told me what he had been working at, and we had a conversation upon the work to be done during the night. We bade one another good-evening, and he started for camp, down hill towards our picket in the ravine. The Russians at the moment were busy shelling Gordon's battery, from very large mortars, and I stood there for some time watching

their practice. One that burst high in the air attracted my attention, and with those about me I laughed at the badness of the enemy's fuzes. In a few minutes a sapper non-commissioned officer came running up the hill to where I was standing. Out of breath when he reached me, he jerked out the words that Captain Craigie had just been killed. Upon reaching the picket he had halted to light his pipe, and was in the act of doing so from the pipe of another man, when a great piece of the mortar shell at whose premature bursting I had just been laughing struck and killed him on the instant. What a curious chance! for we were accustomed to regard that outpost as quite safe from all fire. The soldier from whose pipe he was taking a light, and whose face was close to his, escaped unhurt. Such is siege work; death often comes to men in what are regarded as the safest corners.

It is no easy matter to describe General Gordon, then Captain J. W. Gordon, after whom was named the Twenty-one Gun Battery in the first parallel of the right attack, of which he was the commanding engineer, and immediately under whom I served through the siege. He was a silent man, and I don't think it could be said that he was ever very intimate with any one in the Crimea. I subsequently made a long voyage with him to Nova Scotia, and during its progress he kept to himself very much; always civil and cordial in his greetings he preferred to walk the deck by himself. It was the same in the Crimea, and he struck me as one bowed down with the weight of a sorrow he would mention to none. A deeply religious man in whom danger apparently excited neither pleasure nor repugnance, he seemed only to distinguish between a safe position or an extremely perilous one as he would notice any slight

change in the weather of a fine sunny day. Uninfluenced himself by his surroundings, he was nevertheless well aware of how much the example shown by a man in his position affected those around him. He knew how infectious courage was, and how much any exhibition of contempt for personal danger braced the nerves and steadied the heads of those less gifted with masculine daring than he was. He was a man in a hundred. During a lull in our siege operations, one sailor was overheard saying to another in a battery, "I haven't seen old Gordon here lately." "No," answered his shipmate, "the fire ain't hot enough for that old beggar just now."

In how many different forms do both courage and weakness of heart show themselves in time of danger. Many a brave man is for the moment dazed by the horror of what seems inevitable destruction in the next instant of time. But give him even one minute, and he will so pull himself together as to act with well directed bravery. I could write a long theme upon the effect of great and unexpected danger upon even brave and determined men. The good that is within us varies much in quality as well as quantity, and is called into play with a force which depends much upon the natural disposition and attributes of each man. Each of us is affected differently in manner and in measure by external circumstances. And so it is with our nerves and the control we all strive to exercise over their vagaries.

On the night of March 22, 1855, the enemy made a determined sortie upon what was eventually our third parallel. They drove off our trench guard from the greater part of it, and an Albanian who was with the sortie was bayoneted as he fired his pistol into a magazine of small arms ammunition. Major John Gordon, as he then was, had neither

pistol nor sword with him, but standing behind a neighbouring traverse, defended the passage round it by stones hurled at any Russian who tried to pass that way. In the act of doing so, whilst his arm was drawn back to throw a stone, a musket bullet went through the upper and also the lower part of his arm. It was he who subsequently exercised so great an influence over Charley Gordon, commonly known as Chinese Gordon, but there was no blood relationship between them. I often heard the following pretty legend about him; I cannot pledge myself for its truth, but I can say with all confidence that the main outlines of the story accord exactly with my estimate of his character. He, being an eldest son, had inherited a property that made him independent. He fell in love, and upon proposing for the lady, learnt from her that she was in love with his younger brother. He forthwith made over his possessions to that brother so that he might marry and make her happy.

We heard of the Czar Nicholas' death early in March, 1855, and Lord Raglan sent the news under a flag of truce to the Governor of Sebastopol, but he refused to believe it. A few days later we had a short cessation of hostilities to bury the dead lately killed during a sortie. In a conversation with the Russian officer commanding the sentries placed on the enemy's side to mark the limit beyond which we might not pass, one of our officers referred to this event, but the Russian would not have it, declaring it was impossible, for God would not, he said, thus afflict Holy Russia in the midst of so great a war.

I have often been asked my opinion as to the capabilities of the Royal Engineer officers with whom I served before Sebastopol. I only knew well those of the right attack, and regarding them I give my opinion here for what it is

worth as an outsider who had the privilege of serving with them in the greatest and most remarkable siege the corps had ever been engaged in. Whilst the same regimental spirit influences them now as in 1854–5, I think they are infinitely better and more practically educated than they were in the Sebastopol epoch. We had several stupid men amongst those who served in the Crimea, who could not, I think, have passed the examinations now required for entrance into that corps. Their practical and general education is now much better than it was in the middle of the last century. There were a few, a very few, idle fellows amongst them, as there always must be in all professions. But taking them all round, it would, I am certain, be impossible to find any body of officers more devoted to their duties or more indifferent to the serious dangers those siege duties entailed. We assistant engineers who had not been educated at Woolwich or trained at Chatham were wont to smile at their airs of assumed mental superiority over the officers of all other branches. Few of them knew much of the world, and most of them had been so long employed in the repair of barracks at home and abroad, that their military education whilst in the Army had not amounted to much. Indeed, I always regarded most of them as men who had been rendered small minded by their training and through their little knowledge of the world, and who were not well educated outside their own duties. They were in, but not of, the Army; they wore its uniform, but, until the Siege of Sebastopol, few of them had ever done a soldier's duty. I did not know one of any eminent ability or of the great breadth of mind and general capacity which distinguished that eminent soldier, that sagacious adviser, General Sir John Burgoyne. In

fact, I don't think they were by any means as clever as they thought they were. All of them had, however, received what was then a good practical training at the Chatham School of Military Engineering. None of them had had any previous war experience of any kind, and were too bound down by the historical precedents they had been taught at Woolwich Academy. In all difficulties, I may say upon every occasion, each of them apparently said to himself, "Our officers did so-and-so at such-and-such a siege in the Peninsula War," and he shaped his course accordingly. None seemed to think it was desirable to reason out each particular problem as it arose according to the commonsense exigencies of the moment: they ransacked their brains for precedents instead. I believe all would have done better had they never read *Jones' Sieges in Spain*, and had not that book been reverenced as the sapper's "Book of the Law." But if our engineers were old-fashioned, so were our generals. No new light, no useful gleam of imagination or originality, ever illuminated whatever may have been their reasoning powers. Never was any great siege more stupidly planned throughout. We floundered along upon archaic principles, without even a Pallas to inspire us with originality enough to invent a wooden horse on modern principles that might open for us a passage into the city.

During the siege one or two engineer officers were taken prisoners. A curious circumstance is connected with one of them, Lieutenant James, who was captured the first week of July, 1855. He sent a letter to camp under a flag of truce, asking that his clothes, etc., etc., might be sent to him. All communications under flags of truce, I should mention, were made at sea by the war ships of the besiegers

and the besieged. In the little note which thus reached us from him there was a line scored out with ink marks, which of course gave rise to much speculation upon our part. A sharp fellow amongst us suggested that if we painted the obliterated line with lime-juice, the last made ink strokes would come out first, and we should be thus able, for a few minutes at least, to see what Lieutenant James had originally written. This was done with great success, and we read the erased words, which were as follows: "I was taken to see General Todleben" (the great Russian engineer who immortalized himself by his splendid defence of the place); "he was in bed, having been recently wounded in the leg." This was the first intimation we received of this fact, and showed us how anxious the enemy were to keep it from us. I wish we had had a Todleben to direct our siege operations, even though it had been necessary to convey him in a Sedan chair through our batteries and parallels daily!

In the winter of 1854–5 I made frequent visits to Balaclava to purchase food during that first never-to-be-forgotten period of misery. How curious, how melancholy, was much of what I saw upon that dreary track of mud we called a road. How grotesque were many of the figures I often passed upon it, how sad were others! Here and there a British soldier staggering under the incumbrance of much warm clothing that must have been designed for a giant, whilst by far the greater number of our men were in sorry, worn-out old great coats that afforded them very little warmth. All had a care-worn look that bespoke overwork, insufficient food, and incipient disease. Who that saw it can ever forget the appearance of our men upon fatigue duty whom one met there daily. My heart was often

torn as I saw the starved mules and horses similarly employed, their drivers striving to keep them on their feet as they crossed the deep mud holes that abounded everywhere. In the midst of unavoidable misery, as also when struggling with danger, what an uncomplaining fellow is the British soldier! He was always energetic; either cursing his mule that had fallen from want of strength to drag itself through the Kadakoi quagmire, or laughing at his comrade who had stumbled into some deep rut. What saddened one most upon that road were the long strings of sick and wounded being conveyed from camp to the hospital ships in the harbour. Few men now remain to tell the story of that first, that unlucky winter. Many of its incidents have faded from my memory, but were I to live for ever I should never forget the manly, uncomplaining resignation of our soldiers throughout its appalling miseries.

The poor Turkish private was a still more melancholy figure in that "slough of despond." Starvation and want had reduced him to little more than a skeleton hidden away under the hood of his reddish-brown coloured grégo. No one apparently took any interest in his health, comfort, or welfare. He looked the picture of resignation, accepting the position not only as his fate, the decree of Allah, but as if there was nothing in it to occasion surprise.

On that road one met all sorts and conditions of men, and the French army was always fairly represented there. First and foremost came that best of all *corps d'élite*, the Zouaves, daredevil fellows who in so many of their characteristics resembled our own soldiers. Infinitely superior in physique and spirit to the ordinary French conscript, they fraternized with their red-coated allies and did not conceal their contempt for the "Johnny Crapauds" of their

own Line regiments. As I bent my way to our little port in search of provisions, I often met parties of the picturesque Chasseurs d'Afrique on their grey barbs, and also the brown-skinned, fighting Algerian sepoys of Louis Napoleon. How the little vagabond Greek shopkeeper from Stamboul and the Jew from Alexandria used to fleece us at Balaclava! Many of them became very rich. As a rule I treated myself to a pint of so-called champagne upon these visits, paying half a sovereign for this refreshing and fizzing foreign beverage—whatever it consisted of. The one great shop-keeper of Balaclava must have made a large fortune at that time from the British officer.

As the winter wore on, our army grew daily smaller, and the men who remained seemed to have lost their usual light-heartedness. The fun and chaff our men generally delight in was then seldom to be heard from their lips. A saddened look that betokened low spirits, the result of privation and of over-work, had settled upon too many faces. What killed our men most was the want of firewood. At first the high bush that covered the field of Inkerman supplied them with ample material for cooking. Up to about the beginning of February our fatigue parties dug up the roots of this bush, and, when dried a little, it partially supplied our wants. Our billhooks and pickaxes were, however, made of such miserable metal that they were poor implements for such work. Why do we always supply our army with tools of a very inferior quality? If the soldiers who have to use them were allowed to buy them also, we should have as good axes and shovels as other armies. The consequence of our lack of firewood was, that we all soon began to eat our salt pork and red navy-junk in a partially uncooked state, and this brought on diarrhœa,

which too frequently ended in dysentery, that scourge from which nearly all of us suffered and which killed so many.

But I never felt any sort of pity for myself or for any officer in the army. We could always afford to buy food. A trip to Balaclava meant, as I have mentioned, a pint of fizzing liquid and plenty to eat. A box of sardines kept one alive for a day. But how different it was with our men! They had no half-sovereign to pay for food; they had no change of clothes when they returned to camp from the trenches; they had no beds to lie on at night, not even when grievously ill. Poor gallant fellows, how nobly, how uncomplainingly they died!

In the Government that sent our men to the Crimea there was no soldier: all its members were political gentlemen. I trust that in the next world they may be the slaves of the noble spirits who died of want before Sebastopol through their ignorance of war, of its wants, and of its stupendous difficulties.

During one of my very first visits to Balaclava, as I neared that little port I was stopped by a well dressed merchant seaman, who wanted to know if he were on the right road for our camps. I said "Yes," and we had a little conversation, as I endeavoured to explain how he could best find his way there. I said, "Those are a good pair of long boots you have on. Will you sell them?" His answer was, "Yes, I gave thirty shillings for them as I was leaving Liverpool, and you may have them for three pounds." I asked the same question about the new and very good warm-looking pea-jacket he wore. He was quite willing to take four pounds for it, having paid half that sum for it. I said, "Take it off, and the boots too." He did so, and I handed him over seven pounds. I wish that all the money

I ever possessed had been as well, as usefully expended. He did not see Sebastopol that day!

In the spring I sketched and carefully examined the ground where our troops had stood and fought on that Guy Fawkes' Day at Inkerman. I fully realized how nearly we had been destroyed, and admired more than ever the splendid fighting qualities of our regimental officers and of the rank and file they commanded. Indeed, my oft repeated study of this battle on the heights where it was fought, made me feel prouder than ever of our race, though fully convinced that our affairs were so abominably mismanaged upon the occasion that the Russians ought to have utterly destroyed us. All who that day saw our men fight were loud in praise of their regimental spirit and of the devotion of our officers to their men. It was indeed a soldier's battle, and who can praise their valour enough! What Napier wrote of it as displayed at Albuera is equally applicable to the way in which all ranks stood at Inkerman. The noblest traits and virtues of the British soldier and of our regimental officers came out there all the stronger because of the painful contrast between such qualities and the helpless, feckless ignorance of war displayed by many of our generals and their inept staff upon that occasion. His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge was in the midst of the hardest fighting in and around the two-gun battery, and I have heard men say it was difficult to understand how he escaped being shot, for he stuck to his post to the last, encouraging by his example all around him.

But the Battle of Inkerman could never have taken place had any ordinary care and intelligence been shown by those who selected the positions for our outposts, whose

purpose it was to watch the enemy's movements, to ferret out his intentions, and so to protect us from surprise. It was a disgrace to all the staff concerned that we were caught napping by an enemy whom we allowed to assemble close to us during the previous night without our knowledge. Had any general who knew his business—Sir Colin Campbell, for instance—been in command of the division upon our extreme right that Gunpowder-Plot Day of 1854, we should not have been caught unawares. No trouble was taken even to send patrols into the valley of the Tchernaya, where a main road crossed the river by a bridge near its mouth. We sat down quietly on the top of heights and slopes, making no effort to ascertain what the enemy were about a mile off at the bottom of them. In all the history of modern war, I do not know of another instance of such culpable neglect on the part of divisional commanders of all the well-known and long established precautions that should be taken by troops in the field against surprise. We knew the enemy were near us, and but eleven days before, that enemy had made a serious attack from the Tchernaya valley, only a few miles above Inkerman, upon our short line of communication with Balaclava. The fighting characteristics of our soldiers and regimental officers were so conspicuous throughout the Battle of Inkerman that we have been content to forget the culpable professional ignorance of those who had been selected to command them. May God defend us in future against any similar reckless selection.

Upon the evening of that day, we were told, two generals of division urged the immediate re-embarkation of the army, a disgrace from which we were saved by that cool determination which, even under the most adverse circumstances,

never forsook Lord Raglan for a moment. His was courage of the highest order.

For months afterwards, the events of that battle were topics of daily conversation in camp, and those who had seen most of it, and who knew most about it, could not speak too highly of our regimental officers and of the men they led, or condemn too emphatically the inefficiency of our leaders. Of course, there were exceptions, for there were a few right good men amongst our generals—dear old Sir George Brown, who commanded the light division, for example, in every sense a fine soldier of the old school. He was the coolest of men, and under fire was an object lesson to all who saw him. He stuck to "pipeclay" to the last. A friend of mine had found him shaving before daybreak the morning of Alma, and without doubt he was the only man who used a razor upon that occasion. No matter how hot the day, he was never seen without his leather stock; indeed, it was generally believed that he slept in it. A braver man of the Peninsula school never wore the Queen's uniform.

There was also General Pennyfather, the daring Irishman famous for his swearing propensities, his reckless courage, and his splendid behaviour at Meanee.

Of the brigadiers some were very good men. There was first, above all the others, Sir Colin Campbell, of great war experience, an able leader, and a first-rate soldier, who was trusted by his men and by all who knew him; there was also General Codrington, a keen, active soldier, and though without much experience, he was already learning quickly. If either of these, or Sir Richard Airey, had been in command at Inkerman, we should not have been surprised as we were on November 5. But the active, keen, and edu-

cated soldier to whom I soon found all the best men in our Crimean army who knew him well looked up to as a future leader, was Sir Richard Airey, the last of the three generals I have named. He was the one great redeeming feature at Army Headquarters. Cool, with perfect manners, a beautiful horseman and keen sportsman, he was also a highly educated soldier who had studied the science and the art of war in all its phases. No man knew our army better in every sense. If the war-ignorant Government which then ruled England had only consulted him before their rash Crimean venture, he would have saved them from that scathing denunciation passed upon them by the Parliamentary Commission which subsequently inquired into the cause of our failure and of our men's misery. He would have made them view the question of the war before them in its proper light. He could, and he would, have told the amiable politicians who constituted the Cabinet that our army was unfit for war and unprovided with the administrative services or the reserves of men without which no regular army can long exist in the field.

All through the winter I heard the events of the Battle of Inkerman so fully discussed by staff and other officers who had taken part in it, that I came to know its details as I had never known those of any other battle. It was filled with splendid examples of heroism and with episodes that are as striking as any that have been since described by General Marbot.

During the last winter, 1855–6, my immediate chief on the quarter-master general's staff of the light division was Major the Hon. Hugh Clifford, of the Rifle Brigade, a brave, daring soldier, and an indefatigable worker. Many years afterwards he served under me in South Africa, and

both as my master and as my staff officer I entertained a high opinion of him as a soldier, and a personal affectionate regard for him. He was A.D.C. to General Buller, who commanded the 2nd brigade of the light division at the Battle of Inkerman. In the thick of that fight, when galloping to deliver an order, his horse jumped some high bushes. Upon landing beyond them, he found himself confronted by two Russians. One, as well as I remember the story, he knocked down with his horse, and the other he slashed with his sword heavily over the arm, nearly cutting it off. Some two or three days afterwards, when going round the brigade hospital with his general, they came upon some wounded prisoners. One, whose arm had been amputated, smiled and nodded at him, and when an interpreter was found, the poor Russian said he recognized in Clifford the man whom he had tried in vain to kill, but who had instead nearly cut off his arm. A quaint recognition, a strange addition to their respective circle of friends.

But as I was not at the battle I shall not relate any more second-hand stories about it. When the summer of 1855 had set in, I made many water-colour sketches about our position at Inkerman. Upon one occasion my presence evidently attracted the attention of the enemy's riflemen in the rock-cut chapel on the other side of the valley, and they began to use me as a target. A few bullets whizzed past, to which I paid no attention, but at last they put one into the sloping bank on which I sat, and so close to my feet that I felt the thud it made on entering the ground. I took this to be a polite notice to quit, so, collecting my sketching block and paint-box, I moved off slowly, that they should not have the satisfaction of knowing I was disturbed by their good shooting.

COLONEL CHARLES GORDON

In a future volume I shall have much to say about "God's friend," Colonel Charles Gordon, in many ways the most remarkable man I ever knew. But as I met him first at the time of which I am here writing, when we were both doing duty in the trenches before Sebastopol, I shall at once say a little about him. We were friends, drawn together by ties never formulated in words. In a conversation I had with him the year he left England, never to return, he told me he prayed daily for two men, of whom I was one.[1]

In these material days of money grubbing, when the teaching of Christianity is little practised and the spirit of chivalry is well-nigh forgotten, I cling tenaciously to every remembrance of our intimacy, because he was one of the very few friends I ever had who came up to my estimate of the Christian hero. He absolutely ignored self in all he did, and only took in hand what he conceived to be God's work. Life was to him but a Pilgrim's Progress between the years of early manhood and the Heaven he now dwells in, the Home he always longed for.

History tells of only one faultless Hero, and His story is set forth in the Gospels. The character of Christ as therein depicted was always uppermost in Gordon's mind. When in any difficulty his first thought was, "What would my Master do were He now in my place?" It was this constant reliance upon his Maker, this spiritual communing with his Saviour upon every daily occurrence in life, that enabled him absolutely to ignore self and take no heed for what to-morrow might bring forth. It was because of this faith that he cheerfully gave up his life in the endeavour to do

[1] I believe the other was Colonel J. F. Brocklehurst, C.V.O., C.B., then commanding the Royal Horse Guards, and of whom I know he was very fond and of whom he had the highest opinion.

what he believed to be his Master's work, the mission he willingly undertook to Khartoum. To understand that Master's will in all the events of his splendid but curiously varied career, he studied the Bible in a way rarely practised since the early days of Christianity. He was mortal, and was not therefore perfect. But the more I study his noble life the more I am dazzled by its untarnished glory, as the eyes are by staring at the midday sun. To those who would belittle his memory, I can only say, "Go and do likewise."

When I first met him in the Crimea, he was a good-looking, curly-headed young man of my own age, both of us being then in our twenty-second year. His full, clear and bright blue eyes seemed to court scrutiny, whilst at the same time they searched into your inner soul. An indifference to danger of all sorts, or, I should rather say, an apparent unconsciousness of it, bespoke a want of the sense which generally warns man of its presence. His absolute single-mindedness of purpose startled me at times, for it made me feel how inferior I was to him in all the higher qualities of character, and how inferior were all my aims in life to his.

CHAPTER IX

Assault of the Quarries and the Mamelon
1855

THE Redan was constructed upon a high detached feature that ran north-west and south-east on the rocky, stony ground lying between the Woronzöff and Middle Ravines. It was about 100 feet below the level of what we called Frenchman's Hill, on which we had opened the first parallel of our right attack. About 430 yards south-east from the Salient of the Redan, were some rough piles of stone, named by us the quarries. They stood on what I may call the backbone of this feature, at the edge of a ridge where the ground dipped rather abruptly towards our trenches.

By the end of May we knew in the engineer camp that all the besieging batteries were to open fire in a few days, preparatory to an assault of the Russian works that were nearest to both the French and English trenches. We subsequently learnt that our attack was to be confined to the Quarries, whilst the French assaulted the Ouvrages Blancs, near the extreme right of the Russian position, and also the Mamelon, between five and six hundred yards south-east of the Malakoff, upon which the enemy had recently constructed a strong redoubt.

At 3 p.m. on June 6, all the allied batteries opened fire, and the very earth seemed to heave and shake from the

violent concussion of nearly 600 heavy guns and mortars with which we pounded the Russian works. The enemy were somewhat taken by surprise by this sudden outburst of fire from all the besieging batteries. The Mamelon alone replied at once, but in about twenty minutes most of their important batteries were in action also. It was a very hot day, and a piercing sun seemed to broil our brains, badly protected then by the tailor-designed forage caps we wore. The heat told seriously upon our artillerymen and bluejackets, who worked hard at their guns all day. The roar of guns from both sides was terrific. Maintained as long as daylight lasted, it seemed as if "all Bedlam were let out." When we could no longer clearly see the Russian embrasures, our gun fire gradually slackened, and a heavy mortar fire replaced it. This was maintained throughout the night to prevent the enemy from repairing his shattered works or replacing his injured guns. The very sky seemed alive filled with our shells. Their burning fuses streaked the sky in all directions with long lines of light as they travelled, each over its own special parabola, with a seemingly deliberate and horrible precision. As they sped upon their death-bearing mission they resembled fireworks, but we all hoped that each meant destruction to the enemy. Now and then a badly fused shell burst in the air with a loud report, and one heard its great heavy and jagged splinters tear through the darkness with a weird, whistling noise, as of some rushing meteor on its final journey gone. By day you may dodge such missives, but at night one can but listen for their noisy advent, glad indeed when the ear catches the heavy thud with which they strike mother earth as it were in maddened anger.

There were some sixty-six mortars in the British bat-

teries, almost all "13 inch," the shell for which, with its bursting charge, weighed about 200 pounds. Of them we required 500 for each piece, or over 30,000 in all for this bombardment alone. Most of those were dropped into the Redan and its flanking batteries. The reader can therefore picture for himself what must have been the effect caused by such terrible missives in such an enclosed work. However, it is desirable the reader should understand that Todleben had provided well against danger from mortar fire in the construction of all his great works of defence. I can best describe his plan to the non-professional reader by saying he made them with two parallel lines of parapets one within the other. Between them were the guns and all the men who served them, so that shells, unless falling within the narrow space between those two lines of parapets, did no one any harm: all the splinters that flew towards the gun-detachments from the shells falling in the interior of the work, that is, inside this inner line of parapet, were caught by it. This plan, in works like the great Redan for instance, though it required a vast number of workmen, must have saved thousands of Russians from wounds and death during that prolonged siege. We never had men enough to enable us to make our siege works as strong and effective as they should have been. In fact, from the day we invested Sebastopol until the fall of that place, our army was too small, ridiculously too small, for the siege to which a British Cabinet, in criminal ignorance of war and of the soldier's science, had committed England.

Fire was resumed by all our siege batteries at daybreak the following morning, June 7, 1855; in fact, as soon as we could clearly see to lay our guns upon the Russian works. It is not easy to describe what being in any large siege

battery at such a time is like. The gunners and sailors, perspiring at every pore and begrimed with dust and gunpowder, worked with little on beyond their trousers. Volumes of thick smoke in those days of black powder hung round all our batteries in action, making it at times no easy matter to lay our guns effectively upon the enemy's embrasures. Amidst the roar and air-shaking discharge of such heavy guns and mortars, the men, blackened with the smoke of gunpowder, worked in silence. The only voice you heard was that of some young artillery officer in charge of a section as he called out at times some order, such as "Number three gun there, half a degree more elevation," or some other laconic order or meed of praise, such as, "Well done, number five," when a shell from it burst in the embrasure to which its attentions were at that moment specially devoted. If there was any breeze the officer's position was to windward of his guns, in order to avoid the smoke when observing the effect of his fire. It was delightful to watch the coolness of these young artillery and naval officers, many of the former but lately from Woolwich Academy, as with binoculars in hand, they stood in more or less exposed positions as cool and collected as men may be seen at "annual practice" on the Shoeburyness Ranges.

As noon drew near it became evident that our fire was getting the upper hand, and gun after gun in the Russian batteries ceased to annoy us. The Redan looked very much knocked about, and the guns in the Mamelon had been practically silenced. In his history of the siege, General Todleben says the western face of the Malakoff had been almost silenced by the slow but accurate British fire upon it. On the 7th the Mamelon was completely silenced, its face towards us being nearly razed. Orders had been issued

for an assault upon the quarries to be made at six o'clock that summer evening, when, at the same moment, the French were to attack the Mamelon. This would enable those works to be taken during daylight, and would give us the cover of night to make good our lodgment in them and connect them with our nearest trenches.

Colonel R. Campbell,[1] who commanded my battalion, the 90th Light Infantry, was to command the troops in the assault of the quarries. He was a fine gallant little fellow; a keen and ambitious soldier of much experience, he was just the man for such a duty, and he deserved well of his country for the splendid service he rendered all through the night that followed.[1] I had been told off as the engineer to connect the quarries, when we took them, with our trenches to the eastward, in which I took up my position early in the evening of that June 7. The working party to make that connection was there also. I counted its numbers and explained to the officers with it what their work was to be, adding that we were not to begin until evening had fallen sufficiently to screen us from the enemy's view. By six o'clock, everything being ready for the coming attack, a signal was given. It was a moment of intense excitement to every man in the besiegers' works. Captain Barnston, of my battalion, then upon the headquarter staff, had been sent into the French trenches near the Mamelon to see that the signal for assault when made there was understood and acted upon by us near the quarries. When the Zouave told off to hoist the signal flag had done so, he looked towards our works to assure himself it had been seen. At that moment his eyes fell upon our assaulting column as it

[1]He was killed at the head of his regiment whilst fighting his way into the Residency at General Havelock's Relief of Lucknow.

charged for the quarries. The sight was too much for the impressionable Frenchman, and in a moment he had thrown his arms round my naturally demure comrade, and hugging him in a close embrace, cried out, "Ah! les braves Anglais; c'est magnifique."

Throughout a siege, it is amongst the regimental officer's duties to see that his men never unduly expose themselves to the enemy's fire, and in our trenches before Sebastopol one tired of warning them not to show their heads above the parapets. To men so taught for many months, it is a new, a strange sensation to scramble over those same parapets, and then, fully exposed to view and to missiles of all kinds, to double forward and attack in the open. We are all creatures of habit, the British soldier especially so, because of his daily attention to orders, and to the lessons he has learnt from his officers. But towards the close of a siege, when he has to suddenly ignore the teaching on this point which he had previously received, and for the time being to scorn all cover, the change with some is not easily taken in.

From where I was, the attack upon the "Ouvrages Blancs" could not be seen, but I had a clear view of the ground between our advanced trenches and the quarries, and also of that lying between the Mamelon and the French trenches in front of it. As the moment for the assault drew near, each man around me seemed instinctively to hold his breath in a state of pent-up mental pressure. In our hearts, all were deeply, intensely excited, but in true English fashion each strove to gulp down any outward expression of his natural feeling, and to look as indifferent as possible. My own experience tells me that when you look round the men of a storming party you are about to lead, or even to

accompany, and see them "strain like greyhounds on the leash," your heart is much lighter and your feelings far brighter than when you are doomed to watch others storm whilst you look on with all the calmness you can muster, or pretend to. Such I know were my sensations when at six o'clock I saw the British redcoats swarm over our advanced trenches and with that exciting, that terrible British cheer so well known to our enemies all round the world, charge over the space between them and the quarries.

As I looked towards the Mamelon, my blood tingled in every vein when I saw our brave, our gallant allies pour over its parapets in the most dashing style, some of them, in their excitement, even ran out beyond it, making for the Malakoff. Our assaulting column similarly gave way to the enthusiasm of the moment and pushed forward beyond the quarries when they had taken it. But in both instances, beyond making the Russians "sit-up," as our men subsequently described it, this daring did not, and could not under the circumstances, lead to any useful result. The Russian soldiers upon all occasions proved themselves too stalwart an enemy to admit of any such tricks being played upon them by what was at that moment little more than a party of the most daring spirits of a storming party. Besides, the hopelessness of any such attempt is easily understood when it is remembered that our English trenches barely held enough men even for the capture of the quarries. But both the Redan and the Malakoff had been seriously shattered by the concentrated fire they had just sustained. Many therefore thought that had the French commanding engineer's able plan for the assault of the Malakoff three months later been followed upon June 7, we might then have taken both the Redan and the Malakoff. The diffi-

culty in all such siege operations, after the successful assault of any line of works, is to have enough men close at hand to back up those who have taken them. It is only in extremely rare cases that the siege-works nearest the point to be attacked will hold more men than are necessary for the first effort. No such works as those of the Redan and Malakoff when taken in any siege can be retained possession of unless the besieger has the means of pouring into them a continued stream of fresh troops. That lesson the English learnt to their cost three months later. The French knew it, and, as I shall describe further on, they had, on September 8, wisely made their arrangements beforehand to meet the difficulty. But imagination was never a strong characteristic of that most gallant and devoted body, our Royal Engineer officers before Sebastopol. This repulse of our daring and enterprising allies in their unprepared rush upon the Malakoff, gave renewed confidence to the enemy. In a moment I saw them stream from the works around it, and charge the gallant but evidently blown Zouaves by whom the unexpected attack had been made. The Russians, pushing their success, re-entered the Mamelon with the retreating French, and my heart sank as I saw that work once more in the enemy's possession. But their success was short-lived, for the French reserves coming up, the enemy were quickly driven from the Mamelon, and I rejoiced to see them running back helter-skelter for shelter in the Malakoff.

Whilst thus intensely absorbed in watching these history-making events and waiting anxiously for the sheltering protection of twilight to begin my allotted task, the message came, that as Captain Lowry had just been killed I was to take over his duty. The task to which that gallant young

Irishman had been told off was to unite the quarries—as soon as we had taken them—with Egerton's pit, the distance between those two places being about 180 yards. I had no time to moralize nor to grieve for the loss of a brave comrade, nor was it a place to think of anything but of one's own special work, for death at the moment sang around us in what seemed a crowd of passing bullets.

I soon made my way to Egerton's pit, and as I clambered over its gabions to get forward to the quarries, "a swish" of "grape" or tier-shot whistled by, and one of the bullets cut open my right thigh. As a wound, it was nothing, for although its mark still remains, it merely cut the skin badly enough to make me bleed profusely. The amount of blood that soon covered my clothes gave me, however, the appearance of a badly wounded man. Indeed, I only refer to this scratch at all because of the amusing incident it gave rise to the following morning.

Upon entering the quarries, I found Colonel Campbell, of my own battalion, in command there. The number of men at his disposal was ridiculously small and entirely inadequate for the double duty of defending the place against the sorties that were sure to try to retake it, and for the formation of a good lodgment there. The parapet built by the Russians was on the south side of the quarries, and was thus behind his men. Whilst, therefore, constantly engaged with those sorties he had also to construct a parapet in front of him, north of the quarries, and between him and the enemy. There was practically very little earth in the locality. Any scanty soil that was there originally had been scraped away by the Russians for the parapet they had made between them and us.

I had soon cut a passage through the parapet of Egerton's

pit and had laid out with a row of gabions the communication between the quarries and Egerton's pit. As any plan of our trenches will show, I broke the line of that communication with what I may describe as a kink, in order to defilade the half of it that was nearest to Egerton's pit, the other half, that nearest the Russians, being defiladed by the quarries, which stood on much higher ground and hid that half of my trench from view.

My working party picked and shovelled hard through that night of sorties, heavy firing, noise and shouting. It was the busiest night I ever spent, and the night of the hardest work and most constant fighting I passed during the siege. I do not know how many serious attempts the Russians made to retake the quarries under cover of the night that followed, but in looking back at the affair as a whole, it would seem that when I was not working hard at my flying sap,—which was my special task—I was in the quarries at Colonel Campbell's side, helping him, and cheering loudly to encourage the men around him to hold out against the renewed efforts of the enemy to retake what we had captured.

All the chief incidents of that night are still fresh in my recollection, and I delight in recalling its stirring events. My blood tingles even now as I think of how bravely our men fought upon that occasion. That "war is a horrible thing," is a very nice heading for the page of a schoolgirl's copybook, but I confess candidly that in my heart I always thoroughly enjoyed it. Surely it has a very glorious side to it. You find man at his best and at his worst there. What can be grander than to see men boldly face death for the honour, the glory, and the prosperity of the country they love and whose interests they put before self and all earthly

considerations! It is self-sacrifice of a most pronounced type, the acme of noble excitement, the apogee of patriotic enthusiasm.

In the quiet hum-drum of home life and of all its dull humanizing but often vulgar influences, we may moralize over the angry passions which war develops. The heart is easily saddened by thoughts of widows and orphans made to satisfy war's greedy maw; but what nobler heritage can poor sinful man leave his children than the fact that he willingly died that England might be renowned and great, and her people safe and prosperous? This is not the outburst of some frenzied poet; it is the sober, calm opinion of a soldier who knows from experience what war's vile horrors are and who still suffers much from the penalties that it exacts.

Before day broke, I had fairly well accomplished my allotted task, although several partial attempts had been made by the Russians to retake the place we had captured. My working party were thoroughly worn out, but all ranks, I am sure, felt they had made a long step in advance towards the goal our army had so long been trying to reach. The fighting in front of the quarries had been so constant throughout the night that little progress could be made towards the construction of an effective parapet on the Russian side of it. A line of gabions, and stones, and I believe even the bodies of the dead Russians, had been piled up so as to screen our men, if not from shot, at least from view, as soon as daylight should dawn upon us. At some places the gabions had been fairly well filled, and a little parapet constructed. Its strength was soon to be tested. Before day broke I went into the quarries to see how matters went there. I found the colonel of my battalion doing all he could

to strengthen his position. But his men were "dead beat." Many lay about snoring loudly, notwithstanding the constant roll of musketry and the occasional booming of guns and the bursting of shells. He was anxiously hoping for reinforcements of fresh men, and was naturally most desirous to see them arrive. Whilst standing with him behind the miserable little shelter which want of earth had prevented him from making better, peering through our glasses into the dark space between us and the Redan, there arose, apparently close to us, that horrible jackal sort of rasping, screeching, discordant yell which with the Russians takes the place of our manly and telling British cheers. We all knew it meant another sortie, and from the hour of night it was easy to understand that it must be the last effort the Russians would make before the sun rose, and that consequently it would be pushed home with all possible strength and vigour. We answered their cry with such cheers as we could get from our tired and pumped-out men. Colonel Campbell and I mounted his tumble-down makeshift for a parapet to give the men heart, and he kept his bugler hard at work. Had I never before heard the regimental call of the 90th Light Infantry I should have learnt it then. The "advance and double" the "alarm and assembly," and many calls also then peculiar to light infantry regiments, followed one another in quick succession. The Russians howled, but there seemed much hesitation about their advance. Doubtless they too had had "enough of it" during the night, and wanted rest also. But I am sure that our cheering imposed upon them and made them think we were confident and anxious they should come on in order that we might destroy them. Had they known our real condition a well led charge of a few hundred Russians would have cleared

us out of the place in five minutes. As Colonel Campbell and I stood on the top of his little parapet cheering wildly, I perceived a long column of the enemy through the feeble, misty light before dawn of day. I could distinguish men, evidently officers in front, who were apparently doing their best to get their soldiers forward, but to little purpose. They were at last within ten or twelve paces of us. If I thought at all, it must have been that my last hour had come. I fired my revolver "into the brown" of them, for it was indeed a critical moment. Our men do not, in fact no soldiers, fight their best at night. Each side attributes to the other an unreasonable superiority in strength and an eagerness to engage which is generally fictitious. What would not a hundred English gentlemen acting as a company of private soldiers achieve at such a moment either in attack or defence? Had we then had a couple of such companies there, how we should have sprung upon the head of that Russian column, and, driving it back, we might probably have been able even to enter the Redan with the enemy as they retreated! And if, on the other hand, the Russian officers whom I could descry pulling their men forward to the charge, had had such a company behind them, they would certainly have been back in the quarries in the twinkling of an eye, and its few defenders must have been either killed or prisoners in the space of five minutes. At any rate, they could and would have easily retaken the work they had lost the evening before.

Both Colonel Campbell and I, and without doubt many other officers also, shouted ourselves so hoarse that we could not speak all next day, nor indeed could we do so well for some days afterwards. In no other twelve hours of my life have I ever taken as much out of myself as I did that night.

With daybreak all danger from further sorties ceased, and I was just able to stagger out of the quarries and literally to throw myself down in the semi-twilight of dawn on the sloping and sheltered ground immediately behind them. I was asleep in a moment. How long I lay there like a log I don't know, but a voice close by woke me at last as I heard some one express regret that I was amongst the dead. I said—as I was afterwards told—"I beg your pardon, I am worth many dead men yet." I found it was the naval lieutenant, Prince Victor of Hohenlohe, afterwards known to so many as Count Gleichen, who had taken me for dead. It was not surprising he had done so, for most of the poor fellows who had fallen during the night's fighting had been carried out of the quarries and placed upon the sloping bank where I had thrown my wearied body to rest. Besides, as I had bled pretty freely from the slight wound I had received in the thigh when the "evening's entertainment" first opened, I was much besmeared with blood when Prince Victor recognized me amongst the numerous dead that lay around me. He gave me something from his flask, and I staggered along as best I could towards the Middle Ravine picket where my groom usually came with a pony for me in the morning. But I had about a mile and a half of tortuous zig-zags and trenches of sorts to get through before I could reach it. My chief difficulty was to keep awake, and as I staggered along I must have had very much the air of a drunken man to any stranger. But I reached the picket at last, where I met a right good trench comrade and a real fighting soldier, Major Maxwell of the Connaught Rangers, commonly known as "Paddy Maxwell," to distinguish him from a Scotchman of that same name in his battalion who was called "Bumble Maxwell." My Irish friend had just

arrived on horseback from a tour of duty as field officer of the day, and at once lent me his horse, as mine had not turned up, and helped me to mount, which I had barely strength to do. I don't know how I got back to camp, but I do know that several times during that ride my " mount " and I nearly parted company. I slept well all that day.

CHAPTER X

Repulse of the Allies on June 18, 1855

THE allied armies had been too long stationary, and the very trying months of winter's hardships had sorely reduced the British numbers through want and overwork, and the disease which always results from them. When summer came at last, all ranks were, I think, somewhat " down in their luck." The army of France was very large ; ours was absurdly small for the duties it had to perform all over the Empire. Napoleon III could more easily send a division to reinforce his army in the Crimea than we could spare even one extra battalion for that purpose. England's generals, mostly ignorant of war's science, had allowed the army to be surprised at Inkerman, where our loss in battle was so great that during all the subsequent winter months we were compelled to play a strictly defensive rôle. But the recent success of the English and French besieging armies at the quarries and the Mamelon had put new heart into both of them. We all longed for another opportunity of showing what we could do, and hailed with delight the news that we were at last to storm the Redan, and the French the Malakoff. This had been decided at a meeting of the allied commanders on June 16, 1855, and it was arranged that all the besieging batteries should open fire at daybreak the following morning. It was settled

that should this bombardment produce a sufficiently decided effect upon the enemy's works it would be followed by an attack upon both these Russian works two hours after daybreak on June 18. During these two hours of daylight, the heaviest possible fire was to be poured from all the besieging batteries upon the Redan and the Malakoff in order to destroy any new works that might be constructed and any repairs to old ones that might be effected during the preceding night. It was also hoped that this avalanche of shot and shell would so maul the abattis round the Redan as to make good openings through it for our stormers. It could not fail to inflict a heavy loss upon the enemy, crowded as they certainly would be into every part of their works to resist the assault they anticipated, and we expected that it would also dismount a large proportion of the guns that could be brought to bear upon our attacking columns. But this was not to be, for late in the evening of June 17 General Pellissier informed Lord Raglan that he had changed his plans, and that his troops would move forward upon the Malakoff at three o'clock the following morning. This put an end to the two hours' bombardment we intended to have had before the assault was delivered. I do not know for certain why he found it necessary to alter the hour fixed for the assault, but I assume it was because he discovered he could not conceal in his trenches all the troops he intended to employ. Under cover of the night he could mass as many troops as he wished along the line of his siege works in front of the Malakoff, but as soon as day broke, if they remained stationary they would be exposed to destruction. To storm at the first streak of daylight became therefore a necessity with him. But what neither commander seems to have fully grasped was, that we had not as yet sufficiently

subdued the enemy's fire to make any assault probably successful. The Russians had an unlimited supply of guns in their great Black Sea fortress, and consequently we were not justified in expecting to assault it successfully except immediately after a very heavy and prolonged bombardment.

I went on duty to the trenches the evening of the 17th, and worked hard all night preparing for the assault we were to make next morning in three columns upon the Redan. The sad events of that morning are only too well graven on my memory. Wild hopes had filled my head during the previous night, and I was elated because I believed we should succeed. It was arranged that Lord Raglan was to take up his position during the assault in No 9, more commonly known as our "eight gun battery." About 1,000 yards from the Redan and eighty feet above it, this battery was a good and fairly secure spot for the purpose. From it one had a good view of the centre of the Russian position that extended between the Woronzoff Road and Careening Creek. The signal for our assault was to be a rocket fired from that battery.

At selected spots I collected the woolsacks intended to fill, or at least partially to fill, the Redan ditch, and also planks to lay in it where we might expect to find boards covered with spikes driven into them like the quills of a porcupine. Such, when laid on the bottom of a ditch, form a serious obstacle, and are not easily crossed by a crowd of excited stormers. Grappling irons to drag away the abattis that formed a close line round the Redan had also to be thought of: and lastly, a considerable number of scaling ladders which were to be carried and placed in position by the naval brigade under that bravest of brave sailors,

Captain William Peel. All this employed numerous fatigue parties during the night, and kept me busy.

Before day broke Lord Raglan, accompanied by the commanding engineer, General Sir Harry Jones and a numerous staff, had taken up his position in No. 9 Battery, which was on the extreme right of the second parallel of our right attack. Man is not usually at his best in the dull, mysterious hour immediately preceding daybreak. But we braced ourselves for the coming assault, for all in their hearts must have felt as I did, that this was to be no ordinary morning in the history of our nation. We spoke in low tones, but I felt confident we should win, and longed to hear the cheers with which the day's work was sure to open.

In our trenches the troops to be engaged—and they were ridiculously few—were in their places by two o'clock of the 18th, all still under the impression that our batteries were to pound the Russian works for a good two hours before the assault was delivered. But as the sun began to brighten the eastern sky one caught the sound of heavy musketry in the Malakoff direction, which told us the French were already in action, and within a quarter of an hour Lord Raglan ordered our signal rockets to be fired. In my opinion this was a mistake, unless of course it was done in fulfilment of a promise made to General Pellissier that come what might he would storm whenever the French did so. I never believed we could hold the Redan if the Malakoff remained in Russian hands. According to my views, therefore, until the French had taken that work we should have restricted our offensive operations to mere skirmishing towards the Redan and to making feints to help the French by inducing the enemy to believe we were about to assault. The Malakoff was the key of the position, and when it was

taken the Redan would fall as soon as the French had turned the Malakoff guns upon it. The Russians could not, in my opinion, have held it under the crushing, enfilading fire from the Malakoff and the cross-fire our batteries could bring to bear upon it. As for our left attack, it was not expected to take any part in the attack. But, together with many others, I had long held the opinion that our commanding engineer had made a serious mistake in originally giving it the importance he had done. One half of the troops allotted to it would have been ample to have kept the enemy from taking possession of the broad spur upon which its approaches had been constructed, and the other half would then have been available for the right, which was our serious attack.

I don't believe the Russians had learnt from spies or other secret sources that our assault was to be delivered on June 18. They had evidently guessed our intention on the natural assumption that Louis Napoleon and his people should wish that date to be remembered in history as the anniversary of a victory won by the allied armies of England and France, and no longer as exclusively associated with the destruction of the great Napoleon and of his splendid army at Waterloo. The fact that the Russians expected to be attacked that morning came home to me in an instant when, upon the advance of our storming-columns, I saw the superior slope of all their nearest works covered suddenly, as if by magic, with their soldiers. All their batteries opened fire, not only upon our attacking columns, but also upon our nearest batteries, No. 9 coming in for what seemed to me as more than its due share of attention.

If the ground over which our three British columns advanced upon the Redan looked at first like a field made bright with red poppies, it seemed, in the twinkling of an

eye, as if struck by a terrific hailstorm that had swept them away, leaving the field strewn with the poppies it had mown down.

No British or French soldier entered either the Redan or the Malakoff that day, except the few who may have done so as prisoners. Of that I am certain, notwithstanding what others with more imagination than accuracy of statement may have alleged to the contrary. It took very few minutes to realize that we must fail, for no forlorn hope that ever mounted the deadliest breech could have faced such a fire, or could, in fact, have lived under it many minutes. The fire of shell and round shot upon No. 9 Battery continued to be disagreeably hot. I was talking there to a friend in the Connaught Rangers when a round shot took his arm off, covering me with small pieces of his flesh as it did so. He fell, but jumping up quickly, said he was not hurt, being for the moment unaware that he had lost an arm. In another moment I saw Sir Harry Jones—our commanding engineer in the siege—tumble backward from Lord Raglan's side, the blood pouring through his white hair from a bad scalp wound. His head only had been exposed as he and the Commander-in-Chief both peered over the parapet towards the Redan, and though his wound was not in itself a very bad one, it was "a narrow shave," and seemed all the more horrible in a white-haired old man than it would have done in a younger soldier.

The affair was soon over: it was a solemn moment to all of us, for we felt humbled in spirit by failure. The whole manner of our assault was not creditable to our commanding engineer, who did not seem to understand that you can ask too much from even British soldiers. Upon this occasion, what was asked from them was beyond the power

of men to give. Our plan for the attack was simply idiotic, and was bound to fail. I watched the handsome well-bred features of Lord Raglan as he spoke sympathetically to Sir Harry Jones, upon whose advice, I presume, he had agreed to the attack being made. He was quite calm and collected, with all the grace and high-bred manner that invariably characterized his every action. I walked behind him out of the battery to see he did not lose his way in our somewhat puzzling trenches, and when we reached the right approach that led back to the first parallel, we fell into a stream of men carrying stretchers, each with a badly wounded man upon it. On the first stretcher that Lord Raglan encountered lay a young officer—I withhold his name and regiment for the sake of the old and historic corps to whose ranks he was a disgrace. As to himself, I hope his hateful and undistinguished name has been forgotten as he himself should be. Lord Raglan, going up to him in the kindest way, said in the most feeling and sympathetic tone and manner, "My poor young gentleman, I hope you are not badly hurt?" or some words to that effect. This brutal cur—I subsequently knew the creature well—turned upon him, and in the rudest terms and most savage manner, denounced him as "responsible for every drop of blood that had been shed that day." Wounded though this ungenerous fellow was, I could with pleasure have run my sword through his unmanly carcass at the moment.

Ten days afterwards the brave and gallant soldier Lord Raglan died, as I have always thought, of a broken heart. In common with most of the young Army school of that day, and we were all prejudiced and badly informed on the point, I never thought he was equal to the conduct of a great war. He seemed to lack the imagination, the military instinct,

the knowledge of war's science and the elasticity of mind and body that is essential for the general commanding an army in the field. He had an extremely difficult game to play. The Government of the day, plunging stupidly into war with a great European Power of whose military strength it was apparently ignorant, had invaded the Crimea with little knowledge of its geography and still less of its rigorous climate. When disasters ensued, as is usual with politicians in power, the Ministry had striven to throw the blame upon the general commanding in the field and upon the staff who had not even been selected by him. But Lord Raglan's military virtues were many. His steadfast courage, and his kindness of heart to all about him, were taking traits in his character, whilst his well-born dignity of manner had doubtless much influence over foreigners upon all of whom God had not been so bountiful in natural gifts.

The respective losses in killed and wounded of all ranks during the bombardment of June 17, 1855, and in the assault upon the day following were, British, 1,500; French, 3,500; and Russian, 5,400. Of the three British and three French commanders who led the six attacks, four were killed and one disabled. Their names were: General Campbell and Colonel Yed, killed; and General Eyre, wounded.

CHAPTER XI

The Battle of the Tchernaya

ON August 16, 1855, I was one of a small party of engineer officers who were engaged in drinking tea and munching biscuit in my tent before daybreak, when the sound of heavy firing, in what at first seemed to be the Balaclava direction, caught our ears. We had risen at that early hour with the intention of riding to the French and Sardinian camps lately established on the Fedukine Heights overlooking the Tractir Bridge on the Tchernaya River. Running from our tents, we quickly realized that the firing was increasing in intensity and that a battle was raging in the neighbourhood of that bridge. Our horses had already been saddled for our start, so we were soon making at a fast gallop for the high point where the Woronzoff Road begins to descend from the Sebastopol plateau into the Balaclava plain below. When we reached it, the panorama spread out before us was a very fine military pageant. The Russian foot, still some forty-five or fifty thousand strong, were in full but leisurely retreat towards the Mackenzie Heights, whence they had advanced under cover of the previous night. They seemed to be in two lines of battalion columns at short intervals, with flanks well protected by about five or six thousand horsemen. A couple of hundred field guns—some of which were still in action—warned the French not to press too closely upon the heels of their retreating enemy.

We were told that our allies had been informed through spies that this attack was impending, and yet they allowed themselves to be surprised. This considerable Russian army had deployed during the preceding night within a couple of miles of the French pickets, without their knowledge, for the purpose of surprising and driving the French from their *tête du pont*, and of crossing the river there to secure the Fedukine Heights beyond.

We spent little time, however, in admiration of the scene before us, but, descending in haste to the plain below made quickly for the Tractir Bridge. I soon learnt the particulars of their attack, which did not add to the reputation of Prince Gortschakoff, who was said to be then in command.

Several French and Sardinian batteries were plying the retreating enemy with shell, and I saw a great rocket plump into a battalion column, and, exploding as it did so, break it up, at least for the time. Our Royal Artillery battery of four thirty-two-pounder brass howitzers took an important part in this action, driving back the Russian guns that were inflicting heavy loss upon the Sardinian outposts. From what I heard, the attack was badly planned and executed, being never pressed well home, though the Russians forced their way into the *tête du pont* from which the French had bolted somewhat hastily. The dead and wounded lay in small heaps all round the vicinity of the bridge over which the Russians had poured in considerable force. It is not easy to estimate the number of dead and wounded upon any field, but I should say that I saw at least 2,000 Russians killed and wounded lying about upon both sides of the river near the bridge.

The heroic action of a battery of French horse artillery had done much towards the eventual success of the day.

The Russians having captured the French *tête du pont*, boldly crossed the river and also the aqueduct that was but a very short distance behind it. The main body must have been slow in its movements, for no large Russian columns ever seemed to have crossed the Tractir Bridge. Whilst the Russians "fiddled about," instead of pushing boldly forward and up the Fedukine Heights, this splendid battery of French horse artillery arrived at a gallop, unlimbered close to the bridge, and came rapidly into action. Horses and men were mostly destroyed and the guns and limbers nearly knocked to pieces by the Russian fire, but it effectually stopped the enemy's advance at a time when every minute was of inestimable value to both sides. To gain time to enable the French to come into action was what the French commander desired most, and it was secured by the noble self-sacrifice of this horse artillery battery. What was most essential to the Russians was to get at least a division into position on the high ground beyond the bridge, and this they were prevented from accomplishing by the splendid conduct of that horse artillery battery. The gun teams were lying about, mostly dead, though a few horses, evidently in great pain, were struggling to gain their feet, whilst here and there others with broken legs, unable to rise, with a touching look of calm resignation that I can still see in my mind's eye, were nibbling the short grass around them. The conduct of this battery upon that occasion was an instance of self-devotion that deserves to be for ever remembered in the history of the French Army, full as that history is of noble deeds done by its chivalrous soldiers. Had I been the general officer commanding our army in the Crimea I should have given the senior surviving officer of that battery the Victoria Cross. It was on my

way back to camp along the Sebastopol Aqueduct by the Lower Tchernaya, that I saw for the first time Mr. Russell, the justly celebrated " special correspondent " of the *Times* newspaper. He was not popular with the Army, and those officers who had the privilege of his acquaintance were generally looked upon with suspicion as anxious to be made known in England through the columns of that greatest of all daily papers. The consequence was that his friends and those whom he praised were not always those who were the most highly appreciated by the thoughtful men amongst us. I fully recognized even then how much we owed him for his outspoken denunciation of the disgraceful manner in which our army had been sent by the Government then in office to the Crimea without land transport of any kind. But at that time I was intensely prejudiced against him, a feeling that was still far stronger against the officers who were his friends. Many years afterwards, when I had the privilege of becoming intimate with him, I became much attached to him. Endowed with the most genial disposition and the warmest of Irish hearts, he endeared himself to all who knew him well. His sympathies are always with both individuals and nationalities whom he conceives to be oppressed. The fact that one of the opponents in any important struggle is much stronger than the other, no matter which may be in the right, inclines him to sympathize with the weaker side. The impression abroad in the Crimean army was that he was over kind to even the glaring faults of his best friends.

The Russian army was very indifferently handled throughout this badly planned battle, and its commander gained no practical advantage from the serious loss he sustained in killed and wounded.

CHAPTER XII

My Last Night in the Trenches

MY last tour of duty in the trenches was the night of August 30—just a week before the final assault on September 8—when at about five p.m., in company with Lieutenant Dumaresque, of the Royal Engineers, I reached the Tool Park behind the first parallel, commonly known as Gordon's, or the Twenty-One Gun Battery. When going on and returning from duty, I usually rode from camp down the Middle Ravine, to where the picket of that name was posted, and from which a trench ran up the hill communicating with the right of Gordon's Battery. The engineer park of tools, etc., etc., was immediately behind and nearly in the centre of that battery, and in it the engineer officers and non-commissioned officers usually assembled at each relief to arrange the distribution of duties and working parties for the following twelve hours.

The siege was drawing to a close. We all felt it could not go on much longer, for our losses in killed and wounded per week were then great, and our little army could not bear that strain much longer. No more battalions were to be had from home or the colonies, and the untrained boys sent out to us as drafts were only soldiers by courtesy. They were in every way inferior even to the poor narrow-chested creatures who now usually constitute about one-half of our home army. The head of our sap was then

still about 200 yards from the ditch of the Redan. That approach was the left of the two new saps we had lately pushed forward from the fifth parallel, at a distance of some 300 yards apart. These were being executed under considerable difficulties from the very rocky nature of the ground, the close proximity of the enemy's works and of the rifle pits made by the Russians between them and us. This was specially the case with the left of these two approaches, where a subsidiary branch of the Middle Ravine on our right formed an easy and a sheltered road from below to the Redan plateau, over which we were trying to push these advances. This natural road enabled the Russians at night to bring up troops, collected below in the ravine without our knowledge, and with them to pounce upon our covering parties and to rush the "approach" behind them. Here let me say, that long experience has taught me that all well-disciplined troops who are bold enough to attack in the open by night invariably succeed, at least for the moment, and often achieve some important permanent advantage. In a siege they are often able in the first few minutes of their success to destroy works that had taken many days and nights of hard and perilous labour to construct.

These new approaches of ours towards what I may call the *enceinte* of Sebastopol, were made under conditions that would have horrified the military engineers of former times. With them it was a recognized law—as I had learnt from text books—that no sap or other works should be attempted in close proximity to the besieged place until the artillery fire of the garrison had been practically subdued in that quarter. This was so far from being the case with us at Sebastopol—a great naval arsenal, with immense

stores of guns and shot and shell—that whilst we had at all times to be most careful not to expend gun ammunition, except during our regular bombardments, the Russians were always ready upon any provocation to open a vigorous fire upon our trenches. In fact, these two near approaches towards the Redan were pushed forward by us whilst all the guns in it and the adjoining works were ready to come into action at any moment; and they often did so, there being, apparently, an unstinted supply of ammunition in all of their batteries.

The sappers having been told off to their respective duties, it was arranged between Lieutenant Dumaresque and myself that I should take charge of this left advance, and try to push it on during the dark as far and as quickly as I could. I was also to try before daylight to get some good idea of the ground immediately beyond it, as a help to the officer who should be in charge the following night.

I soon reached what was to be my station for the night, and at once reported myself to the lieutenant-colonel in command of the troops there. He gave me a working-party of 150 men, to whom I supplied tools, picks to one half, shovels to the other. I had also fifty gabions ready to take out to put in position beyond the head of this flying sap. I knew there was a Russian rifle pit about 100 yards beyond where I should be working, and this I felt it was necessary we should take if we hoped to make any useful progress. I begged the lieutenant-colonel to allow this to be done, stating my reasons for urging the request, but he did not see the matter in the same light.

There was upon this occasion, and too often throughout the siege, a want of enterprise on the part of the field officers commanding in our advanced trenches, and I think this grew

worse towards the end of the siege. Their great object generally seemed to be, to keep things quiet during their tour of duty, and to leave disagreeable work to those who relieved them. Upon this particular night the lieutenant-colonel was a middle-aged gentleman, and as I thought at the time, devoid of all military zeal and enterprise. Personally brave I have no doubt he was, but he lacked that hardness of nerve required to order men to execute dangerous duties. He was not the man who could coolly lead troops under a heavy fire, and inspire them with confidence and daring as he did so. This is the rarest quality of nerve in man; and of all whom I ever knew, I would name General Sir James Outram as having possessed it in a superlative degree. Whenever, my reader, you meet such a man, mark him well, for he is born of God to command.

Having had a good look at the ground I was to work over, with the help of an engineer sergeant and a few sappers it did not take long to place my fifty gabions in position. This addition to the sap extended it about thirty-five yards nearer to the enemy, and if I could but make a trench behind these gabions, and fill them with what I dug out in making it, I knew that by the morning I should have done a good night's work. I had soon distributed my working party behind the newly-placed gabions, but if I was to avoid panics when so close to the enemy, and to get good worth out of the working party, I knew well that I must protect them from surprise whilst so employed.[1] I urged this necessity upon the officer commanding, and begged of

[1] The official diary of the siege is most inaccurate in all details regarding the events of this night in the Right Approach; my memory serves me well in all such matters, and those details up to the moment of my being wounded are graven upon it, though I have written but few of them here.

him to push forward a good line of double sentries. But, as was only too usual, I found him much disinclined to do as I wanted in this matter. I could only induce him to push out a few men towards the enemy as a covering party. I accompanied him to post them, but he would not listen to my request to take them out to where I wished him to post them. As it was, they were not more than about twenty yards beyond the furthermost of the fifty newly-placed gabions, and all my remonstrances upon the inadequacy of his precautions against surprise passed unheeded.

I may as well mention here that men so used in advance, when as close as we were then to the enemy, generally crawled forward into position, and when there, either knelt or lay down, their rifles at full cock, ready to blaze at any one who approached them in front. Twenty or thirty well nerved men so placed, and firing coolly into any small sortie, were always quite enough to drive it back. But by night even the most courageous often think they see an approaching enemy or other dangers, which have no existence except in their own heated imagination. I have many times known the bravest soldiers on a dark night make absolute fools of themselves. When the human eye and mind are for some long time on the strain by night (and the darker it is the more probable the delusion), neighbouring objects are apt to assume distorted proportions. Stones become men creeping towards you, and a few scrubby bushes are, by the heated imagination, easily mistaken for bodies of the enemy. Those who have done much night picket work know this well, and how the most serious panics have generally their origin in the most trifling occurrences. We do not sufficiently practise night operations during peace.

The ground was rocky, with very little earth, and our gabions were therefore mainly filled with stones. In this condition they are very dangerous, for when struck by a round shot, these stones are sent flying about like the bullets in a round of case. No one spoke. Orders were given in a whisper, and all smoking was strictly forbidden. But the clatter of our tools on the rocks and stones must have soon drawn the enemy's attention to our locality, and I felt from the first that we should not be left long unmolested.

The men had set to work with a will, for all knew that the harder they picked and shovelled the sooner they would secure at least some little cover and protection from the enemy's bullets. All went well until past midnight, and my spirits rose, only to be soon dashed down all the lower. It was, I believe, about one a.m., the gabions being then more than half full, when from close by us there suddenly burst forth that jackal-like Russian yell, then familiar to us. Its weird rasping and discordant note grated upon the ear, for it had nothing in common with our manly and imposing British cheer. It meant of course a sortie. In a moment the few look-out men in our front were back upon us, all breathless from running, and for the instant bereft of reason. The Russians were close at their heels. Nothing is so infectious as sudden terror, especially in the dark. In the first blush of its alarm it often converts staunch, brave men into senseless cowards. This instance was a striking example, for at once panic seized my working party, and all ran for their lives as if the devil were after them.

Up to this I had spent the night in walking up and down behind the men at work, and when this alarm was given I must have been about their centre. In my anxiety to stop

them, I jumped down into the shallow trench they had dug, and caught one of the crowd by his belt behind as he was rushing madly towards the parallel in rear. I must have been tumbled over by the rush of others behind, for I was trodden on and a little " knocked out of time " as I struggled to my feet. When I had done so, I found myself alone in the trench with the Russians on the far side of my partially constructed parapet. I can still see the face of the Russian soldier who, in apparent surprise, peered at me from the other side of the gabion where I was. In another moment I should be a prisoner, for a line of half filled gabions alone stood between me and that dreaded fate. There was nothing for it but to run; this I did without a minute's hesitation; and I must confess, oh, my reader, that my pace was no dignified regulation double, for I went as fast as my legs would carry me. I had only to run about sixty or seventy yards to reach cover amongst the trench guard in the parallel, but even in that short run the indignity of my position was painfully present to me. The consciousness that I was running away maddened me, and when I once more found myself amongst those who had beaten me in that discreditable race, I freely vented upon them the anger I felt at the ignominious part I myself had been compelled to play in the affair. I spoke my mind pretty freely all round, and in a fever heat of rage I abused them as a pack of cowards. My indignant epithets were too much for the British soldier, for in the twinkling of an eye, maddened evidently by my reproaches and ashamed of their panic, they, without orders from any one, rushed pell-mell over the parapet with that glorious cheer which only men of British descent can give. There are no soldiers in the world who could have withstood such a charge; not even the

Russian, and they are about the most stubborn of all fighting men.

In a shorter time than it takes me to write this, we were back again in our flying sap. But alas! in the few minutes during which the enemy were in possession of it they had torn down the greater part of my fifty gabions, and had rolled many of them down the hill to a small graveyard in the bottom of the ravine to our right.

My working party and I were now on much better terms, the men in good fettle and ready to do anything I asked. I told the unadventurous lieutenant-colonel commanding in the parallel that I could do nothing until he had taken the rifle pit which I had previously pointed out to him, and which seriously interfered with the progress of our work. It was within a hundred yards of us, and was a source of constant danger. He had now realized how much he was to blame for having refused to take it when I asked him, early in the evening, to do so. He now consented to its capture, and it was carried in daring style by a fine gallant fellow, Captain Pechell, of the hard fighting 77th Regiment, and I was at last given a sufficient party to protect me against surprise from the ravine on our right. We soon picked up the gabions that had been rolled down the hill, and having replaced them in position, the men were quickly at work again refilling them. I felt sure it would not be long before the enemy would open fire from the Gervais battery, whose guns, between five and six hundred yards off, bore directly upon our sap. I had been told to examine the ground beyond the spot where I should leave off work at daybreak, and to inform the officer who relieved me in the morning what it was like, etc., so that the further progress of the sap might be all the easier to project. This

could only be effected in the dark, and as soon as my working party was once more in full swing I went to the furthest end of the sap, where I began, as best I could in the very dim light around me, to sketch the position in my pocket book. A sergeant of the Royal Engineers was with me,[1] and two of his men at the end of the sap were just behind me. I discussed the lie of the ground in front with the sergeant, but as I did so my eyes wandered constantly in the direction of the above-mentioned battery. Pausing for a moment, I gripped with my left hand a spike of the gabion in front of me, and at that instant the flash of a gun from the very spot I was looking at dazzled my eyes. I had just time to cry "look out," when I was lying on the ground in a confused heap with the two sappers who had been standing behind me. I think I was under both, but I was certainly under one. As the sergeant—who marvellously escaped unhurt—subsequently told me, both were killed; one had his head taken off, the other had a shoulder and lung carried away.

I don't know how long I lay unconscious in that horrible heap of mangled humanity, but out of dim hazy recollections comes one little half-dazed fancy of returning reason. I was certain I was alive, but equally sure that I had lost the top of my skull. I longed to put up a hand to examine my head, but shrank from doing so because of what seemed to me, in my dazed state, the horrible certainty that if I did so my fingers would inevitably dabble in my exposed and protruding brains! My next remembrance is of being

[1] Alas, when I was wrecked I lost my trench pocketbook and am not sure of the sergeant's name, but I think it was Godfrey. All the sergeants of the Royal Engineers whom I knew in the trenches were brave soldiers and very capable and superior men.

marched slowly off, the engineer sergeant supporting me under one arm, a private under the other. At a funeral pace we thus wound our way through the narrow boyaux for nearly half a mile to the doctor's hut immediately behind the quarries. I was still dazed and could barely walk from drowsiness. I must have presented a horrible appearance, for my left cheek lay down over the collar of my shell-jacket. I was much cut about the face and body with stones, and covered with blood, not only from my own many wounds, but from those of the two poor fellows who were struck down with me. Though able to walk slowly with help, I was too dazed to feel pain, and half asleep, I longed to lie down and doze. I could not talk, nor could I have stood alone from sheer drowsiness. Of my solemn procession to the doctor's shambles I remember only one little incident, and I believe it was the noise it made that wakened me to consciousness and so to a remembrance of it. As we passed through the batteries in the quarries, where we kept a large supply of picks and other tools, there fell all round us a hail of small round shot—about one or two pounds weight each—which rattled with great noise on the shovels, etc. The Russians had of late been in the habit of firing from very large mortars bucketfuls of these small shot, and at times of hand grenades, into our nearest batteries. The small shot was specially fatal, for in the dark they could not be dodged as we commonly dodged those shells whose whereabouts was indicated by their burning fuses. The surgeon's hut was made with a splinter-proof covering, somewhat like a magazine. There the wounded were patched up sufficiently to prevent them from bleeding to death until they could be taken to a hospital in camp and thoroughly overhauled at leisure by a doctor

armed with all due appliances. Upon reaching the boyaux leading to this doctor's hut, I found myself at the end of a long queue of all ranks waiting their turn to be examined and stitched up temporarily. The doctors were busy, and naturally anxious to get one off to camp. When my turn came, I was still too sleepy and stupid to state my case, but the careful and attentive engineer sergeant was my spokesman. They looked me all over. I had apparently only one serious wound, though many ugly cuts and scratches. My right eye was bunged up, and that they bandaged, and were proceeding to stitch up my left cheek when I remonstrated. I could feel something sticking in my jaw, and told the doctors, who said it was my jawbone that was broken. I insisted on further examination, which ended in one doctor holding my head between his knees, whilst the other with a forceps pulled out a large piece of jagged rock.[1] I felt easier when it was out. The sergeant got me a stretcher and four men, by whom I was carried back asleep to my tent in the engineer's camp. There I was overhauled by the Irish doctor attached to the engineers, whose Connaught brogue sounds still in my ears. A good and amusing fellow, but, I should say, a very indifferent surgeon. In a few days I was well enough to stand the journey in a cacolet to the hospital established at the Russian Monastery of St. George, on the rocky sea coast between Balaclava and Kamiesch Bay. It was at this monastery that our telegraph cable had been landed.

Captain Sheehy, of the North Staffordshire Regiment,

[1] The engineer sergeant, when he came to see me in my tent the next day, brought me this stone wrapped up in a very blood-stained piece of newspaper. I kept it for some years as a trophy more curious than pretty.

was the assistant engineer in charge there. He and I had shared the same tent in the engineer camp during the summer, so I knew him well, and had a great regard for him as a friend and a soldier. He was a brave dauntless and amusing Irishman without a taint of guile, and blessed with the most loveable of unselfish dispositions.[1]

[1] He had converted into a dwelling place a cave amongst the rocks of a steep gorge that led down to the sea. He took me in there, and its semi-darkness soothed my lacerated eye, which has never since been of any practical use to me.

CHAPTER XIII

The Fall of Sebastopol 1855

ON September 7 Captain Sheehy went early to the front on business. Upon his return he told me he had learnt in confidence, in the engineer camp, that the grand assault of the Russian works would be delivered the following day about noon. The French were to attack the Malakoff and the little Redan, and we the great Redan. Few but soldiers can fully appreciate how this news affected me in my then helpless condition. Delighted beyond measure to think that our day of triumph had come at last, glorying in the anticipation of a great national victory, my selfish heart sank within me: I could not help it—what a strange, selfish creature is man! My personal disappointment was terrible. For several months before I had ceased to expect I should survive until the end of the siege. So many of those around me in the engineer camp had fallen, that I felt, or thought I felt, that my own time must come sooner or later. But what I had not contemplated was that I should live until the assault was delivered and yet be cut off from all share in it. I had done nearly nine months of trench work, not in the left attack, where the engineer duty was comparatively easy, but all spent in the right attack, which was our real, our serious attack upon Sebastopol. I there-

fore felt it hard that at the end of all that long labour by night and day, I should be cut out of what I, in my rebellion against God's will and forgetful of His mercies to me, deemed to be my just reward in the matter.

My friend started for the front after dinner, and I was left in his lonely cave far from all society, to brood over what I thought was my unfortunate luck. I was in low spirits. My good eye was still too inflamed to admit of my reading, and I was indeed lonely and depressed.

Whilst thus brooding over what seemed to be my unhappy fate, my servant, Private Andrews, of my own regiment, came into the cave. I at once saw by his manner that he had something he wanted to say to me. At last, with much diffidence, first resting on one leg, then on the other, a sure sign he had something on his mind that he disliked telling me, he said he had just heard that our battalion was to form part of the assaulting column detailed for the following day. I looked at him from my unbandaged eye, feeling certain of what he was about to say, and at last out it came: he "could not allow his regiment to go into action without him." I pretended I was angry, told him he was a fool, as he would most probably be shot, for I knew him to be as brave as men are made, but I felt drawn to him by his announcement in a way I had never been before, much as I had always liked him and admired his pluck. At last I said: "Very well; I will lend you a pony to-morrow to take you to the 90th Light Infantry Camp, but you must promise to gallop back here as soon as the Redan is taken." This he said he would do; and accordingly very early next morning he started off for a "day's outing with a storming party," that had been told off to take a very strong work by escalade, that was defended by about

the finest infantry in the world, by men in fact who were fully as brave as our own. As I saw my faithful, my very faithful servant, ride off, I felt inclined to cry; I felt deserted, "down in my luck," helpless and lonely. The hospital huts where the doctors and patients lived were a few hundred yards from me. I was thus alone in my cave. It soon came on to blow so violently that even the roar of our guns came to me feebly. Weak in strength and in constant pain in my eyes, my wounds fastened up with sticking plaster, I lay upon my bed listening to the wind howling down the narrow rocky gorge upon which my cave opened. I felt utterly miserable. The doctor came at his usual hour and renewed my bandages, always a pleasant relief to the wounded, and he strove to cheer me up. He was a curious fellow, very attentive to his duty, and very proud of his profession. He knew nothing about horses, but had purchased one the day before, attracted chiefly by its fine mane and tail. That morning his Greek servant had run into his tent, holding up the tail which had come off when he proceeded to groom the animal. He was grotesquely sad over this affair, which he described amusingly; but seeing me so down in my luck, he strove to cheer me up by laughing over his misfortune and at the chaff that was in store for him, and at the prospect of having to ride an almost tailless pony, amidst the jeers of his brother doctors. We discussed the event coming off "in front," but never doubted the result, and when he left me I could not turn my thoughts to any other subject. I went over in my mind the *pros* and *cons.* and the chances, and above all, what was at stake. I knew how much our men had been demoralized by the long siege. We had been for many months teaching them to avail themselves of cover, abusing

them if they exposed even their heads over a parapet. Now they would have to follow their officers over the open and under a concentrated fire to assault very strong works defended by a well sheltered European enemy, who would shoot them down by volleys. A very long siege is destructive to that discipline which is so essential to success in all operations requiring reckless daring, but especially so in the assault of places. I could see the whole thing in my mind's eye. With every parallel, every boyaux, every fold of ground near our trenches and between them and the Redan I was familiar. I saw my own regiment—or rather what then remained of it—huddled together in the fifth parallel waiting for the signal. How I discussed to myself the respective traits of my brother officers, how each would act. How confident I was that whatever befel all would lead their men straight. I had no confidence in our generals; brave men, but, with few exceptions, of little use as commanders, because, ignorant of war as a science, they knew little of their duty as leaders.

Then I began to catechise myself. Why was I not there? Were my wounds of such a nature that I could render no service in front? I felt I could walk, and thought how my conscience would for ever after reproach me for not being there. Why should I not try and escape without the doctor seeing me? At last I could stand it no longer. I dressed, took up a saddle and went some way up the hill to a ledge where my remaining pony was fastened. I can see him now; a little weak grey thing, that looked miserable with his tail turned to the wind, whilst clouds of sharp sand flew past him. On went the saddle, which I could only girth up with much difficulty and very loosely, for I was very weak. I tried to mount, but in vain; my

strength was exhausted, and the dust blown by most violent gusts into my face knocked me back as I strove to do so. The one eye I could see with was still much inflamed, and the sand now made it smart badly. Ashamed at my failure I sneaked back to my cave, and kept carefully secret, even from my host of the cave, the fact that I had made this attempt, too shy to confess that in the mental agony of the moment I had striven to carry my worthless body to the spot upon which all my soul and thoughts at the time were feverishly concentrated. I could not wish my greatest enemy to undergo what I suffered in mind that day, and especially at that instant. It blew very hard all the morning and afternoon, and as I lay on my two-foot wide camp bed in the subdued light of the cave, my mind nearly worked my body into a fever.

At last in came my faithful Andrews, and as I jumped up on his approach I saw he was smiling all over. Hurrah! we had won! He had gone into the Redan with his company and had come away at once, as he had promised me, having galloped hard to be the first to bring me the good news. He said the losses had been heavy, but he could not tell me the name of any one hit. I was another man at once, and sat down to write home. I was delighted at our national success, and proud to think that my battalion had been, as he told me, the first into that Redan at which I had gazed with so much interest, almost daily, for the last nine months.

Some two or three hours later Captain Sheehy, the owner of the cave, arrived, covered with dust and looking glum and downcast. I thought he meant at first to pretend we were beaten, and then tell me the good news. "I know all about it," I said; "you can't impose on me, for Andrews

has been in the Redan, and came back here some hours ago." His answer was: "That may be, but everything has gone against us. We were in the Redan for nearly an hour, but were beaten out of it. The whole thing has been painfully mismanaged." I was struck dumb at this news. The life blood seemed to leave my heart. I did not think, nor at the moment care, about our loss, but of the honour of England, the old fame of our army. It was galling that the French should have succeeded whilst we had utterly failed. I felt ashamed of our army, and yet I knew in my heart, what I am now certain of, that the fault lay rather at the door of those who planned the attack than with the regiments who made it.

For several days after many of my brother officers came to see me, and I heard from the lips of men who had entered the Redan, and been a considerable time in it, what had taken place, and I noted well in my memory their views as to the cause of our failure. My engineer friends gave me their side of the question, and being very soon afterwards appointed to the general staff, I learnt the head-quarter views upon it also. I think I soon came to know as much of what had taken place, and was as well qualified to express an opinion upon the various causes of the failure as any one—I knew most of the actors, those who had planned the attack, and those who had tried to carry out their faulty plan. Examining the British scheme now with a matured judgment and some experience of war, it is to me extraordinary how men of ordinary military intelligence could ever have hoped for success from it. It was as faulty in every detail as it was puerile in conception. Sir Harry Jones, the commanding engineer, was, in my opinion, most to blame, for he at least ought to have known better.

How any one who knew our narrow trenches could have hoped that supports and reserves could be led through them in time to be of any use to the troops who stormed is beyond my conception. The French, whose leaders and whose senior engineer officers were far better masters of their trade, acted very differently. They had drawn a line. as it were, with a ruler over the plan of their trenches from the Middle Ravine to the Malakoff, and wherever that line cut a parallel or a trench of any sort, there they placed a party with picks and shovels to make a wide opening through the parapet and trench the moment the signal for the assault was given. The result was, that within a few minutes of that signal being given, there existed a straight wide road between the two points I have mentioned down which poured, over the open, the columns intended to support the assaulting body. Down that road there even galloped a battery of horse artillery during the worst time the French had that day—when they were beaten out of the little Redan—which came gallantly into action close to that work. It was a splendid feat of high-spirited daring, worthy of the best traditions of the French army. Whether it "was war" or not I cannot say; I do not care. The battery was utterly destroyed, but the feat was certainly one of those daring deeds that make history in an army, and which go so far in a nation's life to make its men brave, and keep alive amongst its people that intense devotion to duty which causes their soldiers to die nobly for their country and for its honour. It was a glorious, a noble example of self-devotion, and I hope that amidst all the many miseries through which the French army has since passed, the remembrance of this magnificently heroic feat of arms is still cherished.

By this road the French assaulting columns received a steady flow of support, whereas, when our advanced trenches were emptied in the first five minutes of the closely packed assaulting columns, empty they long remained. They could only be refilled by the slow process of men following one another like the tail of a kite, in Indian file through the miles of zig-zags behind. In fact no sensible provision had been made for affording the assaulting regiments any reasonable or effective support, and yet even the military schoolboy knows that the first element of success in every assault is a constant pressure of supports from behind. If any gap of even five minutes' duration occurs in that line of pressure, misfortune will probably ensue. It is that pressure from behind which gives confidence to those in front. Remember what a strain it is upon the nerves of poor weak human nature to be in that front rank. It is not all composed of heroes unless it is—as it always should be—composed of daring, reckless volunteers. But no such call was made. No appeal was addressed to the imagination or to the fighting instinct of our men. Had volunteers been asked for, a forlorn hope of say 200 dare-devil men and officers would have given a chivalrous, an infectious interest and energy and dash, and a reckless and romantic spirit to the whole affair that was a sadly wanting element in all the plans for the operation which culminated in our defeat that day.

Every one who was responsible for the scheme of that day's work bungled sadly, and upon them and not upon the troops employed I unhesitatingly place the disgrace of our horrible failure at the Redan. It was the commanding engineer's business to have pointed out the impossibility of effectively supporting an assault by troops marched in

single file through our miles of narrow trenches. Why should I not write all that I felt at the time when the whole thing was brought before me by the narratives of those who had been first into the Redan and the last to leave it? But I refrain from doing so. Let the judges in this case be men who did not personally know those who were responsible. Subsequently in my career I came to know well almost all the generals that day engaged, and I was able to gauge their characters and their military value.

As soon as the leading battalion had entered the Redan, General Windham, who was in command, evidently perceived the hopelessness of the whole scheme our wiseacres at headquarters had made for its capture. There were no supports coming on, and apparently none that could come on in time to be of any use. He then, in, I suppose, the thoughtless hurry of the moment, decided to do what the reputation of the bravest could not stand, and what was without doubt the worst thing he could have done, he decided to leave his command to shift for itself without a leader, and go to the rear to look for support. According to my views on the subject he should under no circumstances whatever have left the Redan. He had accepted the command knowing what the plan of attack was, and if it was obligatory upon any man to have died there that obligation was his. Our only chance lay in having an able, vigorous general on the spot to arrange for the defence of it with the troops he had, and they were but a confused handful composed of many regiments. When he went back he left his men without a leader, without any one to tell the regimental officers what to do, or where to place their men. Within forty-eight hours of the event I had gathered from my brother officers who were in the

Redan up to the last moment, doing nothing and not knowing what to do, that there was no one there to give them orders or to make any arrangements for the defence of the place they had taken. For it must never be forgotten that they did take the Redan, and the fact that we were beaten out of it was not the fault of the gallant and devoted soldiers who stormed it, but of those who planned such a ridiculous assault, and who left them there without support.

The French, when beaten, too often cry out, "*nous sommes trahis.*" The officers who entered the Redan that day were incapable of making any such public or ridiculous charge against their superiors, but in talking over with me, their brother officer, the events of that day immediately after their occurrence they were open-mouthed in their condemnation of those in authority who were responsible for the plan of attack and for its execution.

I draw a curtain over my remembrance of what I learnt from my brother officers, and from others, at that time regarding this disaster. I content myself with saying that had Sir Colin Campbell been given command of the whole business, and allowed to make his own arrangements and plans, and to employ the Highland Brigade, who had practically suffered no loss during the war, we should never have been beaten out of the Redan on September 8. This is only an opinion, but it is founded upon a full knowledge of what took place, and as such I state it for what it is worth.

When the military critic studies the siege operations before Sebastopol, especially those carried on by the English army, he must never forget how absurdly small was the army by which it was undertaken. As for that of

France, its strength was being constantly added to. Reinforcements were poured into the Crimea by the Emperor Louis Napoleon; but we had none to send. We had no Army Reserve to supply our losses in battle or from disease. All that England could do was to send out one by one the few weak battalions that had been left at home when the army embarked for Turkey. Many of these—mine, for instance—had been already freely bled in order to fill up to war strength the regiments at first sent to Bulgaria in the foolish hope of thereby frightening the Russian Czar! I think the 90th Light Infantry gave over a hundred of its best Scotchmen to the regiments of the Highland Brigade, and that was a serious loss to our already weak battalion. In fact, we never had enough men to warrant us in taking the large share we did in the siege of Sebastopol. Had any far-seeing wisdom guided our Royal Engineer counsels when we first reached the heights above Sebastopol, we should not have taken over the siege operations that were involved by our occupation of the ground on which we established our Left Attack. Had we thus concentrated all our efforts upon what we named the Right Attack, that is, upon the high ridge of land lying between the Middle and the Woronzoff Ravines, we should have had quite as much to do as the size of our army warranted. Our attack would then from the first have been solely directed against the Redan. I have no hesitation in saying that the main element in the destruction of our army in the winter of 1854–5 was the inordinate strain thrown upon it by the extent of front we from the first attempted to cover with our siege operations.

On October 1, 1854, the fighting strength of our army was a division of cavalry and five divisions of foot, of which

there were fit for duty about 2,000 sabres and 18,000 bayonets, with the usual proportion of horse and field batteries. We broke ground on the night of October 7, when our total strength in sappers and miners was under 300 of all ranks! The allied armies were never strong enough to invest Sebastopol, and consequently the enemy were able to pour reinforcements into the place to whatever extent they thought fit. To that fact we must attribute the inordinate length of time to which the siege of a city, defended only by improvised and unreveted works, was prolonged.

I was amply rewarded for any service I had rendered before Sebastopol by being specially brought to the notice of the Commander-in-Chief by General Sir Harry Jones, and by the following letter from the military secretary in answer to it.

HORSE GUARDS,
October 8, 1855.

SIR,—Having laid before the Field Marshal Commanding in Chief the letter which you forwarded from Lieutenant-General Sir H. Jones, reporting the zealous and meritorious manner in which Captain Wolseley, of the 90th Regiment, assistant engineer, had performed his duty in the trenches, and stating the high opinion which you entertain of that officer, whose uniform zeal and good and gallant conduct you consider to render him deserving of promotion, I am directed by Viscount Hardinge to state that he has caused this very honourable testimony to the merit of Captain Wolseley to be placed on record, but as Captain Wolseley has only been three years and about seven months in the service, he is ineligible under the regulations to be promoted to the rank of Major, for which otherwise, in

consideration of the service described by Sir Harry Jones, he would have been happy to have recommended him.

I have the honour to be,

(signed) E. YORKE.

His Excellency General Simpson.

CHAPTER XIV

Appointed to the Staff—War Ends, 1855–6

THE doctors who attended me were strongly of opinon that I should return home to obtain the best possible advice about my injured eyesight and I thought so too. I resigned my position as assistant engineer, for, Sebastopol having now fallen, I had no intention of working any longer with that corps. I had been willing to help in the glorious work of the trenches, but I had no notion of settling down to make roads, construct watering places, or to do the other camp work to which the Royal Engineer officers would now be relegated, and which they did so admirably. But all my plans were changed by receipt of a message that Sir Richard Airey, the Quarter-Master General, wished to see me. I was given to understand that he meant to appoint me to his staff. I accordingly rode over to Headquarters and saw him. I knew him only by sight and reputation, but I knew that all the young Army looked upon him as the one eminently able man we had amongst our generals. I longed to be on the staff under him, for I knew it was the sure road to distinction if I did well, and I knew that under him I should learn my profession in the best school. When shown into the little den at headquarters that he had as an office,

there was an officer whom I knew well sitting writing at a table in the corner. He was a clever fellow, and a better artist than he was a soldier.

Sir Richard Airey was very complimentary as to my conduct during the siege, and said he had selected me to serve on the staff under him. I thanked him and was very grateful, in fact I was in the seventh heaven of delight, when in a moment the offer became as it were a Dead Sea apple in my mouth. He said he wanted a good man to go to Constantinople to represent the Quarter-Master General there, and as matters had not been going well, and there was a great deal to do there, he had selected me for the position. I grew crimson as he looked at me, but pulling myself together with great difficulty, I said how much flattered I felt by his selection of me for such a post, but that nothing would induce me to take up any military duty outside the Crimea. That if I left it at all it would be to go home, as the doctors advised me, to see an oculist in London. He was, or pretended to be, very angry, and enlarged upon the importance of the post I had refused, and then turning suddenly round to my friend in the corner, said: "Captain ——, will you accept it?" The answer "Yes" was given with eager pleasure. He went, and what is more, obtained a brevet majority at the end of the war for his services there! However, within a day or two I was appointed all the same to be a Deputy-Assistant Quarter-Master General, and was ordered to report for duty to Major Barnston, of my own regiment, who had been for some time on Sir Richard Airey's staff, and was one of the very best officers, in fact one of the most efficient men in the Army. We were at once sent off into the Baidar Valley with the French column that had moved out there,

our duty being to complete the military survey which the Quarter-Master General's department had been long employed upon. The weather was lovely, the scenery very pretty and enjoyable, and I was with the man I liked best in my regiment. He was an able and a first-class staff officer, who had graduated at what was then called the Senior Department. I owe him a great deal, for he taught me much, being many years my senior. It was a delightful time of rest after the heavy siege work. I was soon hale and strong again, my wounds were healed up and nearly forgotten, though the loss of the sight of one eye was a sad drawback to my pleasure.

We were always well in advance, sketching the ground as far as we dared to go. One morning we were nearly taken prisoners not many miles from Tchorgoon. We had been in a village near the Russian outposts the day before, and had made friends with the Tartar butcher there.

We determined upon beginning our work that morning from the neighbourhood of his house. As we reached it, his wife, a very pretty young woman, ran out, and in a most excited manner pointed to some smoking horsedung on the road and then pointed towards the lances of a Cossack patrol, the men of which, having at the same moment caught sight of us, started at a gallop in our direction. We had just time to turn and escape, for mounted on English horses we soon left the Cossack ponies far behind. All the Tartars in these villages hated the Russians, and looked upon us as the Sultan's allies who had come to deliver them. They were consequently always most kind and hospitable. The method taken by the butcher's wife to make us realize that the Cossacks had just been

at her house was clever and effective, as we could not communicate in words.

When the autumn weather broke, the roads soon became bad, rain fell heavily, and it grew very cold at night. The French force was withdrawn, and we returned to Army Headquarters. I was at once posted to the Light Division, then commanded by Lord William Paulett, commonly known as "Ginger Bill" in the splendid regiment he had commanded, now the Durham Light Infantry.

I served as Deputy-Assistant Quarter-Master General under Major the Hon. Hugh Clifford, V.C., who was acting as Assistant Quarter-Master General for Colonel James Airey. Clifford was a most energetic, hard-working and practical officer, not read in the science of his profession, but a real soldier by instinct. He was, however, so over-anxious to do everything himself that he seldom consigned to me any but the most subordinate duties. I was only twenty-two, and he was much my senior in age. It was no easy matter to make my seniors realize that one so young as I was could know anything of staff work. All those around me in positions such as I then held had been many years longer in the Army than I had been, and looked upon me as unfit from youth for my position.[1] In the other half of the hut which I occupied thenceforward until the army began to embark lived a colleague of the same rank as myself on the staff. He was a good, clever, odd creature, who liked to live alone,

[1] Hugh Clifford subsequently served under me in South Africa, and was to me, who had formerly served under him, a loyal, hard-working staff officer. By his careful management he then saved England many a hundred thousand pounds during the Zulu War.

and did not care for any one's society. He knew little of staff work, and had obtained his berth through family interest. He was very amusing, but suffered terribly from indigestion. One night I was roused by hearing such a noise in his half of our hut that I called out, "What on earth's the matter with you?" The answer was, "Oh! nothing serious; I am kept awake by a horrible indigestion, and am only having some exercise with a skipping rope to try and get rid of it." I wished him and his skipping rope far away at the moment. At the beginning of the war he had been in a Highland Regiment, and when it received orders to embark for Turkey the officers had a mess meeting to discuss what, if any, modification of the Highland uniform and equipment was advisable in order to make it more suited for modern active service. Many suggestions were made and discussed, but before the meeting broke up, my tall friend rose and said he had a proposition to make. "As they were aware," he said, "they all carried a knife and fork as part of their full dress equipment, and his proposal was that they should also carry a spoon!" A moment of terrific silence followed his speech, and then there burst upon him from all quarters, especially from the many English and Irish officers in the battalion, a howl of execration. How dared he to thus turn into ridicule the dress and appointments which they had inherited from their Highland ancestors? Happily for him he was a Scotchman himself of undoubted lineage, or they might in their rage have torn him to pieces. Of course he made the proposal somewhat in ridicule of the many crude ideas and suggestions put forward by others upon the occasion. He was full of this sly, fine humour, which made him a very pleasant companion, but which

did not upon the occasion I refer to commend him favourably to his brother officers. He was, I imagine, too clever for them.

Our second winter in the Crimea was a great contrast to the first; all our men were well housed in wooden huts; cooking was done under cover, and there was a sufficiency of firewood and of food. The men were well looked after, and we had a very good time of it. We had sports and amusements for them in fine weather, and discipline became somewhat "tightened-up" from the lax state into which it had sunk from overwork, bad and insufficient food, and also as a rebound from the strictness with which all military duties had been enforced prior to the war. But the boys that came out with each draft from home were worse than ever. One was ashamed to command them. There were plenty of grown men to be had, but the Government had not the wisdom to make the pay of the rank and file in the Crimea good enough to tempt well-grown men to enlist for service there. When will our rulers awake to the necessity of paying the British soldier at the market rate of wages, as is done in the American army, which, as far as its members go, is, I think, the finest army in the world?

In February, 1856, a horrible-looking little ruffian, who had recently arrived with a draft from home, had murdered an artilleryman in one of the light division hospitals. He was tried by general court-martial and sentenced to be hanged. It was announced that a free discharge and £20 would be given to any man in the Army who would act as hangman, but as no soldier responded to this offer the authorities were in a difficulty. At last a wretched little driver of the lately raised Land Trans-

port Corps accepted the duty. As the prisoner's battalion belonged to the Light Division, the arrangements for the execution devolved upon its Assistant-Adjutant-General, now General Sir Julius Glyn. A gallows was duly constructed by the carpenters of the Royal Engineers and temporarily erected in a stable, where the volunteer hangman was carefully instructed how to perform his gruesome work. During the night before the sentence was to be carried out, the gallows was transferred to the high ground immediately in front of the divisional headquarters and erected where there was ample space for both Brigades of the Division to parade around it.

To make sure of the hangman's presence at this parade, he was kept for the night in our staff stable. The parade was formed early the following morning, and General Lord William Paulett commanding the Light Division, together with his staff, were in position close to the gallows. Some time passed, but the condemned man did not appear. At last our Assistant-Adjutant-General was descried galloping towards us. Upon reaching the gallows where the staff were collected, he said in a somewhat excited voice, "Good heavens, my Lord, the hangman pretends he is mad, and positively refuses to carry out his bargain." Drawn up in a body close by us at the gallows were the provost marshal and the police sergeants of the Division. Lord William, turning to the Provost-Marshal in the coolest possible manner, as if he were giving the most usual order, said: "Captain Maude, you will have the goodness to hang the prisoner." I watched the dismayed captain's face as he heard this order, and I thought he changed countenance. But if he did so he soon pulled himself together again, for he calmly turned round to his provost sergeants and

said: "Which of you will hang this man?" One of them stepped forward and said, "I will, sir."

I shall not dwell further upon the solemnity of the scene. The "Dead March in Saul" was played in front of the murderer as he was marched slowly round the division and finally to the gallows, where he was hanged for his cowardly crime. When the troops had marched away to their respective parades, the little creature who should have been the hangman was taken into a neighbouring stable, and by order of the provost-marshal was there and then soundly flogged. As this punishment was inflicted by the provost sergeant who had to perform the unpleasant duty of executioner in his place I feel sure it was carried out with no light arm.

Coming back from riding one afternoon in the winter of 1855–6, I had just dismounted and gone into the staff hut of the Division to report what I had been doing, when suddenly the earth was shaken as if by an earthquake. The hut seemed to rock and its roof to open. We ran out, and looking to where the noise came from, saw a huge pillar of fire and smoke being shot up into the sky above the siege-train park. A shower of falling bullets soon rattled round on all sides, whilst the burning *débris* of ammunition boxes and of other artillery material seemed to fill the air. Great flames burst upwards from the park, and small explosions followed quickly one after the other. Knowing the quantity of ammunition and of filled shells there was in it at the moment, one felt it was only the beginning of a possibly fearful catastrophe. My horse having only just been taken to its stable was still saddled, so I was soon galloping to the scene of this awe-inspiring conflagration. It was not what had already exploded,

but the knowledge that the great amount of powder in the park and of small arm ammunition in the windmill close to it might be ignited at any moment that impressed me. As I neared the park, a considerable number of Congreve rockets went up and exploded in all directions. Fortunately they were without their sticks, so did not travel far. Upon reaching the windmill, that stood to the right of the light division, a fresh hail of bullets rained around me. The violence of the first explosion had beaten in the wooden roof of the mill, and it seemed that everything burnable in the artillery park was already on fire. The booming noise of exploding shells smote the ear on all sides, and columns of sharp-tongued flames shot up momentarily through the surrounding clouds of dense smoke. It was a truly appalling sight; men wounded by the explosion were being carried off to a safe distance, and in every sense hell itself seemed for the moment to be open before and around us, all apparently expecting each moment to see the earth crack into some great yawning chasm and engulf us. A small amount of calm reflection would have told each and all of us that as the windmill contained nothing but small arm ammunition we need expect no sudden explosion from it. But the mill seemed to warn us to keep at a distance if we wished to avoid sudden death, and few reasoned at the moment. Close by, there was fortunately one of the chief watering-places of the Light Division, where every blanket that could be laid hold of was thoroughly saturated with water before being passed up to the roof of the mill. A ladder was brought from the Artillery Park and placed against the windmill. A gallant young officer, Lieutenant Hope of the Fusiliers, ran up the ladder, and was soon on the

roof. In my mind's eye I can now see that tall, handsome fellow as he stood on the mill distributing the wet blankets over the broken rafters of the roof, and emptying the water buckets as they were passed up to him for that purpose. His was a fine example of cool self-possession and contempt for danger in the midst of appalling excitement, and we were all subsequently very glad when the Queen conferred the Victoria Cross upon him; no man ever deserved it better. A panic is, alas! very catching. But on the other hand, the cool daring of even one young officer in any such sudden and very dangerous emergency, will often—as in this instance—steady a mob of unreasonably excited soldiers. A self-possessed man like gallant young Hope upon this occasion is often worth a king's ransom to the nation.

In the spring of 1856 we had races in the Light Division. We had had several meetings during the siege, and they were a great source of amusement to all ranks. One of our first "race meetings" had been, I think, in the early spring of 1855. They were got up chiefly to amuse and put some life into us, for all ranks were then somewhat depressed in mind and body. At one of them I saw an amusing incident. The races were for ponies—almost all the horses had died during the winter—and as every officer owned a pony the entries were numerous, but the animals were mostly poor, weedy, badly fed creatures. At this meeting one of the hurdles was a little higher than the others, and every pony refused it. There was no getting over it, when my gallant friend, the late Major Arthur Herbert of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, rode up on a big mule and said: "Gentlemen, allow me to give you a lead over." He was a fine rider, and putting his old moke at the hurdle, he cleared

it easily, the others following the lead amidst loud laughter and cheers from all ranks. The men always took a great interest in these races, backing their own officers to win.

The mention of races reminds me of an amusing match made, I think, in the autumn of 1855. It was of a clever pony against a big hunter, each owner to construct four out of the eight fences to be negotiated, all eight to be fair hunting jumps. The owner of the horse of course built up big walls and dug wide ditches, whilst the pony's master made intricate and nasty doubles that very few horses could manage, being too big to clear and yet too contracted for a horse easily to jump in and out of. One was specially constructed with two sets of extremely stiff rails placed so close together that no horse could well jump in and out between them. In each case the jockey had secret orders not to attempt it until his adversary had broken down one of the rails in his attempt to get over it. The result was that as the two horses neared this double their pace grew slower and slower, until at last both pulled up before it, each saying, "After you, please," to the other. The race ended there, but the general opinion was, that as the fence in question had been constructed by the pony's master, its rider was bound in honour to have attempted it.

At the end of the war, some time before we embarked, there were races on a grander scale, open to the French army as well as to all our Divisions. An A.D.C. at headquarters had a remarkably good hunter and very fast, which he sold a week before the meeting came off to a well-known Count in the French army. It won the principal race of the meeting, and the excitement among the French of all ranks was great beyond measure, and amusing to watch.

I think it was a flat race, so the pace was fast throughout, and if they had won a battle from us greater than Waterloo, the rejoicings could not have been louder. They forgot or ignored that the horse was English, had lived on English oats, and had only been in French hands a few days or weeks. Perhaps my words may be tinged with the feeling of irritation which I certainly experienced at the time when I saw the Englishman thus beaten by a Frenchman at a sport then essentially British.

When peace came in 1856, I may truthfully assert that very many in our Army regretted it much, for we felt that whilst at the final assault the French had won—and they well deserved their brilliant success—we had failed. Owing to the want of genius exhibited throughout on the part of those who directed our siege operations, we deserved to fail. I remember how sad I felt when the peace was announced, though no personal considerations influenced me. Indeed, as far as I was concerned, peace was more to my interest, as I could not, according to Army regulations, be promoted until I had been six years in the Army, and I had then only served four.

When writing this my mind harks back to all my youthful aspirations and ambition, to my determination to rise in my profession or disappear in the attempt. I suppose I must have had something in me that caused me to be often singled out for positions far beyond my years, but I felt at the time that my good fortune was the result of my close attention to all duties, no matter how small, that bore upon military work: to my insatiable greed for information upon war, its science and its practice: to my study of military history, to my intense love of fighting and of all out-of-door amusements and manly exercises. So

much was this the case, that I felt bound to control my aspirations and conceal my longing for distinction, and the real enjoyment which even the hardships of a soldier's life afforded me. I was surrounded by men, plucky gentlemen many of them—I daresay far pluckier than I was—who, when put to it, would fight any one, and would fight to the last. But they would do so as a matter of course because they were gentlemen; I did it because, in addition to this feeling, I loved the sport, the occupation, the danger, and the game of trying to overcome the difficulties of any job that might be set me and the rapturous satisfaction which success gave. Some of my companions did their work in a more or less perfunctory fashion, because it was their duty to do it. I threw my whole heart and soul into the occupation, and deserved no credit for doing it, because in itself the work was a delight to me.

General Luders, commanding the Russian army in front of us, paid the allied armies a visit in the spring of 1856. It was arranged that he should review the French army in the forenoon, and then with his staff have lunch at our Army headquarters and review our army in the afternoon.

We knew the French had lost in men very heavily during the winter from disease. When the siege came to an end we had little night duty, and were well fed, well housed and our daily wants well provided for. On the other hand, during the autumn and winter the French, for economy's sake, had stopped the extra "field rations" issued during the siege. The consequence was, that whilst our men had abundance, our allies were badly provided with food and comforts. They had recently buried many thousands from typhoid fever in a graveyard near one of their large hospitals, not far from our Headquarters, and

we believed the number shown in their returns as "fit for duty," did not exactly agree with their parade states. Three staff-officers were told off to count their strength as they marched past the Russian general. I was one of those three, and we were posted at different points on the marching-past line, so as to calculate independently one of the other. All three computations were very much the same, and made the number to be not more than about 30,000, and yet we knew they had turned out every man they could. Our strength on this occasion was quite equal to that of the French. The anger of an enraged people at home had wakened up our Ministers, and consequently our troops were very well cared for between the fall of Sebastopol and the declaration of peace. Besides all this, our staff had been cleared of its most useless men, and —for the most part—officers of military merit and ability had been appointed to replace them.

Our review passed off well; the men were young, but they had picked up a great deal, and thanks to good food and a healthy life in camp, had grown and developed much during the quiet of the past winter and spring. The Highland Brigade was a splendid body of soldiers. It had lost few at the Alma; had not been at Inkerman, nor was it during the winter of 1854–5 employed in the trenches where constant work had decimated the rest of our infantry. In fact, it had done extremely little trench work at all, and had consequently lost few through disease, and we may assume that those few were the weakly men belonging to its historic regiments. Unlike all our other Brigades it was a better fighting body than when it landed at Eupatoria. According to my estimate of troops, it was the finest Brigade I ever saw in any country. As

its battalions marched past at a swinging pace, their pipes playing "The Garb of Old Gaul," any nation might indeed have been proud of them. They were the redeeming feature in our "show" upon that occasion.

CHAPTER XV

The Army Embarks for Home — I Rejoin the 90th Light Infantry at Aldershot, 1856

WHEN it was decided to embark the army, Colonel Ben Halliwell, Assistant Quarter-Master General to the 4th Division, was sent to Balaclava to report upon the manner in which the army embarked and upon the appliances used in the operation, etc., etc. I scarcely knew him, but on my merits he asked to have me as his assistant, so I reported myself to him forthwith. Colonel Jock Mackenzie, the very able Quarter-Master General's officer at that place, had left for England to give evidence before the Royal Chelsea Committee which was the outcome of a report by a Colonel Tulloch, and a Doctor McNeill upon the alleged failure of Sir Richard Airey in the performance of his duty as Quarter-Master General in the Crimea.

Colonel Robert Ross, of the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders who had been Mackenzie's Deputy-Assistant at Balaclava throughout the war, was now in general charge there. An old captain and brevet-major who has been a good adjutant and was subsequently a very good regimental commanding officer—but with no genius of any sort—was helping him, and we all four messed together in the crowded little village of Balaclava. Colonel Halliwell was an eminently able and useful staff officer, a first-rate artist, a remarkably good mili-

tary surveyor and draughtsman, and the best-hearted and most genial of men. He was a universal favourite, and the bravest of soldiers, the most loyal of subjects, the most attached and lovable of friends. He was fond of good living and wished to have champagne for dinner every day. This did not suit the above-mentioned brevet-major, to whom strict economy and saving money was the greatest pleasure in life. He complained of the expense of our mess, so as a concession it was arranged that we should content ourselves with cheap claret except when friends were dining with us. As our quarters, formerly the Russian commandant's official residence, was a sort of " house of call " for all our friends, it was seldom indeed that we dined without guests. But whenever it came to his ears that no one was expected to dinner that evening, dear old Ben Halliwell at once disappeared to prowl about the village bent upon picking up some stray straggler to dine with him, so that he might be justified in having his favourite beverage at dinner. Be it remembered that we had been living for eighteen months chiefly on garbage washed down by hot tea made with bad brown sugar.

Whilst at Balaclava embarking the army we lived well, and Soyer, the French chef sent by our intelligent Government to teach the British soldier how to prepare his food ! used occasionally to cook for us. It was an expensive arrangement, for whilst so employed he required to have his thirst—which was always great—assuaged by copious draughts of champagne. He was a most amusing fellow, full of good stories, which he told well. Asked upon one of these occasions if he were married, he said, with a sigh, that he was a widower. There was a little pause upon this announcement, and then he described the many virtues of his late consort. But we gathered from him that her temper was extremely irritable,

and from what he said she must have had a sharp tongue. I daresay her patience was often tried by her laughing but doubtless loving husband. Looking very solemn he ended his story by saying he had buried her in Père la Chaise Cemetery, having inscribed on her tombstone, "*Soyez tranquille.*"

Colonel Halliwell had a wonderful soldier servant, whom he usually dismissed about once a week, but who took no heed of the dismissal and went about his work as if nothing had occurred. He also had a wonderful horse called "Malt," given to him by some relative who was a great brewer, hence the name. He must have ridden at least eighteen stone, but this horse carried him well, though it had received a bullet through the nose at the Battle of Alma.

We made a pleasant trip to the Alma and to Bakt-shiserai whilst I was at Balaclava; Ross and Halliwell, both heavy men, in a Russian conveyance, and Colonel Pocklington, a visitor from Malta, and I on horse-back. I mounted the latter on my good bay barb, rode a grey barb myself, and took my servant on a pony —the best in some respects I ever had. Let me here record what I gave for the horses I owned at the end of the war, all bought in the Crimea. For an Irish hunter I gave £50 or £60, and sold her to an officer for about the same sum just before the army embarked for home. She was my best mount; for the bay barb I gave £60 to Count Gleichen—then known as Prince Victor of Hohenlohe. For the grey barb I think I only gave £25, though for work he was worth two of the bay, but I bought him from an old French colonel whom he used to kick off every time he mounted. He was really a very quiet, well-behaved animal, but had a trick of kicking somewhat violently for the first few moments when

you mounted him. For the bay Bulgarian pony—bought at Brigadier-General Buller's sale—I had given £25, and he was worth twice that: his fault was shying, which I always thought he did to amuse himself. A white baggage pony completed my stable. He was a poor weedy animal, but docile and steady with a pack saddle on his back. I do not remember what he cost me. The two barbs were stallions. I could find none to buy them when the army embarked, so I sent them to Constantinople with two saddles, bridles, horse's clothing, etc., where all were sold for £25, about the price and value of the saddles and other horse gear that went with them. For my bay pony I received thirty shillings, and the grey pony, having carried my small kit to the wharf where I embarked for home, I turned loose to be picked up by some Tartar in search of an animal. I give these details because I want to show how expensive it often is to serve our country on the staff in the field.

One of the pleasantest trips I made about this time was by sea in a steam tug to Yalta, where is the Czar's Crimean palace. The world has not a more lovely spot; the high range of mountains coming down in terraces to the Black Sea edge—a bluer sea on a fine day does not exist. The spurs of these hills are entirely clothed with trees and the greenest of bush and scrub, through which peep on all sides the reddes of rocks and scarped declivities, and the whitest of red-tiled houses. The sun was very hot when I landed there one Sunday—we had too much to do on week days for any amusement—and it seemed to draw from out this scenery of deep and lovely tints a rich blue mist which appeared to vapourize if not actually to spiritualize all the rich, highly-coloured surroundings. I had, before the war ended, looked down upon this coast from the Arch at the Phoros Pass over which

the Woronzoff road runs, where the traveller from inland catches his first glimpse of the sea. I remember that as I lunched there, drinking in the cool breezes from the sea and lost in admiration of the exquisite view, I was still not unmindful that I might at any moment have had to gallop away from some Cossack patrol, then often to be met with in that neighbourhood. I remember also how the view over Yalta and the Czar's palace had astonished me with its intensely lovely colouring and beauty, and how its quiet repose struck me from the contrast with my ugly surroundings in the noisy bustling arid dusty camp upon those dreary rocky heights overlooking Sebastopol, which seemed at the time to have been already my home for years.

I was one of the last of our army to leave the Crimea. As I stepped on board the steamer that was to take me home, I scarcely knew the little village I was leaving. There were the same old ruined Genoese fortifications with their picturesque, round flanking towers, and our wooden huts still studded the distant valley, the village itself and the heights above it. A few Tartars were listlessly moving about in search of anything that might make their wretched homes beyond the Tchernaya somewhat more comfortable. No one else was to be seen in any direction. The crowds of British officers and soldiers that used to throng its narrow muddy streets all were gone—dispersed in many directions, some to India, others to Mediterranean garrisons, to North America, or to home stations: in fact I may say to every quarter of the globe where our flag flies.

As we steamed out of the deep and land-locked little harbour, so lately crowded with shipping, now without even a boat upon it, there came back to my mind the thoughts and hopes and aspirations of some twenty months before, when,

with my battalion, I first steamed into it. How very much older I felt since then. Men certainly do age quickly on hard active service such as we had had in the trenches before Sebastopol. I asked myself, "Had I done well?" "As well as I expected?" I cross-examined myself, and thought I might and ought to have done better. I could not be promoted major until I had been six years in the Army, and felt aggrieved that the time I had spent in the field in Burmah and in the Crimea was not allowed to count double. Had this been the rule I should have returned home very proud indeed of being a major. But on the other hand, when I remembered my hair-breadth escapes, how near I had often been to death, I felt I was ungrateful to Providence to complain, and consoled myself with the reflection that I must surely be reserved for something good, and that the ambition I indulged in might yet be more or less satisfied.

Thus ended our expedition to the Crimea, so full of eventful memories. I feel proud indeed of the manly courage of my race as I think of the gallant men I served with there, and I can never forget the uncomplaining manner in which our Rank and File endured want and misery in every form.

Our Crimean War cannot be compared to that we waged in Spain early in the century, and yet it was full of dramatic interest. The victory on the Alma did every credit to the splendid discipline and courage of the British regiments engaged. But the plan upon which it was fought showed an utter ignorance of tactics on the part of whoever framed it. No attempt was made to reap any strategic advantage from its fortunate result, a fact that cannot be ignored by the military student. The battle of Inkerman followed—that battle so full of glory for the Regimental Officer, Non-

Commissioned Officer and private. But owing to the incapacity of our Generals we were there surprised, and were only saved from destruction by the fighting qualities of our race, and by the timely arrival of French troops to help us. As long as men value the dogged determination which characterizes the British people, the history of that battle will be read with pride by all English-speaking men and women.

Who that served with the army before Sebastopol can ever forget the misery suffered uncomplainingly by our soldiers in the winter of 1854–5? Companies then tried their best to do the duty of battalions, and in most instances a few men, weak in body from over fatigue and bad food, represented the company.

I never had any pity for myself nor for my brother officers, for once or twice a week we could afford to buy in Balaclava enough wholesome food to keep us alive for days. Besides, we all recognized the advantages of our position. Rewards, promotion and the praise of friends awaited our safe return home. But such were not in store for the most commendable of patriots, the Non-Commissioned Officer and the private soldier. An ugly silver medal was to be his only reward; yet he fought like a hero and suffered with the steadfastness of a martyr. I wish I could put into suitable words my admiration of his character. His devotion to duty, his determination to maintain at all costs the credit of his regiment, is far beyond any praise that I can express in words.

I know that our Generals and our staff were not what they might have been under a different military system. But I agree in the report of the "Select Committee" which, having investigated this matter, put the saddle on the right horse, and

condemned the Cabinet of 1854 as the real author of our misery. The crass military ignorance of that body was only equalled by their baseness in trying to shift the blame of our winter misery from their own shoulders to those of Sir Richard Airey, the ablest officer, in my opinion, who then served the Queen.

Very few Secretaries of State in my time ever seriously prepared for the possibility of our being engaged in any big war. Mr. Cardwell was indeed the first—may I not add, the last—who during peace ever attempted to do this. Sooner than incur the initial expense of doing so, they have seemingly preferred to allow England to remain hopelessly unprepared even for the effective defence of these shores, on the chance that no big war might occur "in their time." Besides, why thus add to their budget, when the chances are fairly even that their political opponents might be in office whenever war may be so forced upon us? During peace we never have the military stores required for the mobilization of the military forces we depend upon for the defence of these Islands. In fact, the great military problems which such an Empire as ours involve are never duly considered, much less provided for. When war is thrust upon us, as it was recently in South Africa, the nation suddenly discovers that we do not possess the amount of guns, ammunition, saddles, harness, wagons, etc., etc., required to place our army in the field. We can't make them quickly enough ourselves, and owing to the hostile action of foreign Governments we are not allowed to purchase them abroad, as we recently found to our cost. When anything goes wrong at the opening of a campaign—and things must, under present arrangements, always go wrong with us in any serious war—the cunning politician tries to turn the wrath of a deceived people upon

the military authorities, and those who are exclusively to blame are too often allowed to sneak off unhurt in the turmoil of execration they have raised against the soldiers, who, though in office, are never in power.

And so it will always be, until poor deluded John Bull insists upon a certificate being annually laid before Parliament by the non-political Commander-in-Chief that the whole of the military forces of the Empire can be completely and effectively equipped for war in a fortnight; or should he be unable conscientiously to sign such a certificate, he should be obliged to specify all our military deficiencies. Who is it that objects to this necessary precaution against disaster? Not, certainly, the Commander-in-Chief; nor any other soldier at the War Office. If this were made law the people would insist upon our mobilization arrangements being complete at all times, and that the arms and stores required to place in the field all our military Forces were in our magazines and ready for issue. But there would never then be any such deficiencies, for England would insist upon having them made good as soon as they were thus reported to Parliament. Alas, alas, poor England! some day or other she will have to pay heavily and seriously for her folly in this respect.

Upon my return home after a short spell of leave I rejoined my battalion at Aldershot. I had served in the Crimea under the general officer who was our new Brigadier, and he now often used me as his "galloper." The dear old fellow was incapable of teaching us, for strategy was to him a sealed book, and of tactics he knew as little as I did about "the theory of original sin." But it was then by no means an uncommon practice with our general officers to lean upon some member of their staff and to be guided by him in

their field operations. How could this be otherwise when the greatest fool who had enough money to purchase promotion had then only to live long enough to enable him to reach the top of the colonels' list and be certain of promotion to general's rank! Some seven or eight years later I knew a nice amiable little idiot, who having thus become a major-general was "selected"—God save the mark—for an important command abroad. Before starting for it he said to a group of old soldier-friends: "I know what my luck will be there. I shall come in for some infernal military complications, and of course I shall make a mess of the whole business." He said he knew he was a fool, but had provided himself with a very clever aide-de-camp upon whom he would lean. That was, I believe, the wisest determination he ever arrived at. All his prognostications turned out realities, but he preserved his good manners and his very cheerful demeanour throughout all his professional trials and failures.

Aldershot was a strange place in those days, and I can conscientiously assert that I never learnt anything there, nor heard of any regimental officer who did. There was no one there who was capable of teaching us. The great Prince Consort, through whose foresight and influence we had obtained our first rifled musket that served us so well in the Crimea and in the Indian Mutiny, had created Aldershot in the hope that it would help all ranks to learn the practical duties of soldiers in the field. It was one of his many laudable ambitions to improve our out of date Army and to make it thoroughly efficient. The idea was a grand one, and if the Army had never had any other good reason to revere his memory the creation of that camp of instruction should render it dear to us. But the manner in which the camp was worked, and the military ignorance of most of those who

were then our instructors there, prevented it from fulfilling the objects for which the Prince Consort had designed it. It was a long time before it became a useful school for military instruction. Sir Hope Grant—a real soldier, a real leader of men, and one who thoroughly understood war—was the first general in command there of any note. He knew what to teach, but he lacked one essential quality; he had great difficulty in imparting instruction to others. I have known many men employed there as Brigadiers who were from every point of view absolutely useless.

The camp was then a somewhat rowdy place. A considerable number of officers went to town every afternoon to amuse themselves there, getting back by an early train next morning that enabled them to be in time for parade. Several of the battalions there had been in the Light Division with us in the Crimea, so there was a considerable amount of mutual entertaining.

Late hours were kept, and the evenings at our mess often ended in an attack upon the quarters of one or other of four lately joined subalterns who had practically no pretensions to the rank of gentlemen. They had been foisted upon us from the Militia during the war, as any Militia officer who could then induce a certain number of his men to volunteer for the Line was given a commission. These could be easily obtained upon payment. These four Ensigns were absolutely useless as officers, and we soon got rid of them. I shall not enter into particulars lest some Secretary of State for War, ambitious of popular applause, might found charges upon them, and try me by court-martial for my "ragging" schoolboy conduct when I was a young captain.

CHAPTER XVI

Ordered to China for War there, 1857

HAVING had some winter leave, I rejoined my regiment in the Anglesea Barracks, Portsea, early in February, 1857, and found every one preparing for a war with China.

Her Majesty's Government had at last fully realized that our relations with that Empire could not, with due respect to our national dignity, be allowed to continue on the footing which her rulers were alone willing to accord us.

We had many outstanding grievances to settle, and until they were fully redressed our mercantile relations with China would be unsatisfactory. Our position at Hong Kong and Shanghai, on the other confines of the Celestial Empire, was extremely unsatisfactory, and very undignified. Diplomacy had completely failed to obtain from the Pekin Government any practical recognition of our national equality with it, and we were still regarded by the Chinese nation generally as mere barbarian traders on sufferance. This was not a pleasant position for the proud sons of Britain!

Many of our ablest consuls, who knew China best, said openly there was no way out of the difficulty except by war. Nearly twenty years' experience had taught them that the terms of peace we had exacted after our war with China of 1840–2, had in no way brought home to its people the conviction that we had defeated them. It was now indeed evident,

not only to our merchants on the spot but to all our officials, that we should never be regarded as equals by the people of China generally until we either went to Pekin as conquerors, or were officially received there with the highest honours as an important and civilized power, as great in all ways as themselves.

Our policy with China had long been essentially Chinese in character. In a figurative fashion we had always attempted to frighten the Pekin Government into compliance with our demands by threats which corresponded in many ways with the hideous masks and senseless flags with which the Chinese imagined they could frighten us during war.

To us soldiers, the general position at the moment partook much of the pantomime transformation scene from the serious tragedy we had recently been engaged in before Sebastopol, to the culminating crisis of a roaring farce before Pekin for which we were now preparing behind the scenes.

At that period Lord Elgin, who was going to China as our special Ambassador, seems to have been regarded as a sort of "general utility man," who could with equal advantage to the State be sent to any colony that was in difficulties, or to settle any dispute with a foreign nation.

Our Ministers wisely determined to strengthen Lord Elgin's hands by largely increasing our Navy in Chinese waters and by the dispatch to Hong Kong of several battalions of the Line. They recognized that, especially in the East, it is the strong who gain diplomatic as well as military victories. Of the battalions selected for this service mine, the 90th Light Infantry, was one.

It was with great joy that I prepared to embark for active service in China at an early date. Many of us found amusement in comparing the enemy we expected to meet there with

the splendid soldiers of Russia whom we had come to respect highly in the Crimea. From books upon its "Flowery Land," we gathered geographical information as to its great rivers, teeming and intelligent people, highly cultivated fields and its strange form of Government. What a contrast our life there would present in all its phases with the time we had passed upon the bleak rocky plateau before Russia's great Black-Sea fortress!

Our whole battalion was composed of young men full of life and spirit, and impressed with the one idea that the world was specially created for their own wild pleasures, of which, to most of us, war with all its sudden changes, and at times its maddening excitement, was the greatest.

A campaign in this quaint Eastern Empire, after a lengthened and dreary siege, had much that was promising for the young soldier. So lately come from the deadly batteries round Sebastopol, how great would be the change from the long war against a first-class military Power to a short campaign against a nation whose soldiers were still extensively armed with pikes and cross-bows, and who still believed in the efficacy of hideous masks and stinkpots! Poor Chinaman, we laughed as we thought of the danger he was, in his ignorance, about to face.

Whilst we were waiting for our troopships, we saw much of the naval lieutenants then fitting out gunboats for service in the China seas. As well as I remember, those boats were known as "forties," "sixties" and "eighties" according to their steam horse-power. None of them were bigger than good-sized yachts, and as they could only carry coals enough for a few days' steaming, they were to make their way round the Cape of Good Hope under sail. It seemed a perilous undertaking to us landsmen; but what is it that our naval

officers ever consider perilous ? Indeed, at this time, every young lieutenant was working heaven and earth to get command of these cockleshell craft. We had come to know many of them in the Crimea, and they often dined with us in barracks at Portsmouth. One, whom I shall call Robinson, had won for himself the prefix of "gallows Robinson" through his recklessness of danger and dare-devil exploits. Sitting next me one evening I asked him how he meant to carry his one six-inch shell gun in his small craft, and what he meant to do if any of his men fell ill. His gun was, he said, to go in the hold as ballast until he reached Hong Kong, and as for a doctor, he declared that he had that morning, when inspecting his crew, told them there was a fine medicine chest below, it was open, and they could all help themselves. With that announcement he flung the key of the chest overboard. All these gunboats reached their destination safely, and most of them took part in Admiral Sir James Hope's daring though unfortunate attack upon the Pei-Ho Forts in 1859, when our Minister, Mr. Bruce endeavoured to reach Pekin by that route. That attack was doomed to failure, and the attempt to take the Chinese works by landing the sailors and marines in the deep mud that surrounded them was a mad act.

It was at last decided that our headquarters and seven companies were to embark in H.M. Troopship *Himalaya* under Colonel Campbell, C.B., and the remaining three service companies under Major Barnston[1] in H.M. Troopship *Transit*. Of these three companies mine was one, and the following narrative of events refers to the fortunes of this three-company detachment exclusively.

The strength of my company was over one hundred rank and file. We had lost so heavily in the Crimea that most of

[1] Both these excellent officers were killed before Lucknow.

our non-commissioned officers were very young, so much so that my colour-sergeant had to be obtained from another regiment. He was a fine looking fellow, but I never took to him, and as I shall tell later on, having found that he did not like being shot at, I got rid of him after our relief of Lucknow.

The *Transit* lot were to embark first, and we had a busy time buying an outfit, not only for the expected campaign in China, but for a station life in India afterwards. Young men under orders to leave home for India are seldom careful of their money, and I cannot say that I was any exception to the rule.

We embarked at Portsmouth on April 8, 1857, a fine clear day with sunshine, but as it was late before we got under way we could not clear the Needles before dark: the captain therefore resolved to anchor for the night in the Solent.

Besides our three companies, we had on board drafts for a regiment that had long been in Hong Kong, and a considerable number of the Army Medical Corps with several doctors and paymasters. The total number of troops on board was between six and seven hundred of all ranks. The commanding officer was Lieutenant-Colonel Stevenson, a young captain and lieutenant-colonel in the Scots Guards—then called the Fusilier Guards—who was going out to be assistant adjutant-general for the war in China. He is now General Sir Frederick Stevenson, G.C.B., and Constable of the Tower. A more devoted or gallant soldier, a more perfect gentleman, an abler commanding officer or a better fellow never breathed. I made his acquaintance the day we embarked, and I have had the privilege to call him a friend ever since. I hoped that I might also be selected for staff work when I reached Hong Kong, as the general under whom I had served on the staff in the Crimea, Lord William Paulett, told me he had

recommended me for staff work to General Ashburton, then commanding in China, and desired me to call upon that officer as soon as I should reach China.

Early next morning, a little after daybreak, I was roused by my servant, who coming into my cabin said in his excited Irish accent, "Get up, sor, shure the ship's going down." I told him to go away somewhat rudely, but he came back quickly and repeated the statement, adding that the ship was already half full of water. I shared the cabin with one of my oldest and best friends, Captain Irby, who commanded another company in our battalion; his servant soon came in with the same story. The regimental call and assembly made us both tumble out quickly from our berths, pull on our clothes and run on deck to our respective rendezvous. I soon found the story was true. Steam being up and the anchor weighed, all hands were soon hard at work with the pumps, whilst the steam pumps shot the water out in tons over her sides, as we made for Spithead flying signals of distress. We had anchored at high water too near the Isle of Wight, and when the tide went out, the unfortunate ship had sat down quietly upon her anchor, its fluke piercing her bottom. This was not discovered until the following morning, when we had been for some time heaving-in our cable to resume our voyage.

It was imperatively necessary for us to get into Portsmouth Harbour with the least possible delay in order to get lashed alongside a quay, where, without moving, our steam pumps could be kept going at full speed. This fastening of the ship to the shore was essential, for by an ingenious contrivance of the man who planned this ill-fated ship, those pumps could only be kept going at their quickest when the screw also was revolving at full speed. But here intervened a serious naval

difficulty which amused us soldiers very much at the time. By Admiralty regulations—and they were imperative—no ship was allowed to enter Portsmouth Harbour until she had discharged her gunpowder. We had a large quantity of it on board intended for the fleet and for our siege train in China. When we reached Spithead the ship was already so low in the water that all the powder magazines had been long submerged. But the captain did not dare to disobey the letter of those regulations although their object had already been secured, for the wet powder could no longer be of any danger to the dockyard. Whilst our position was being slowly spelt-out in flag signals to the admiral ashore, the captain was obliged to keep his ship going round in a circle at full speed at Spithead, for, as already said, it was only by doing so he could keep his steam pumps going to prevent the ship from sinking. At last, permission was signalled that our waterlogged old hulk might enter the harbour. There we were soon tightly lashed alongside a wharf. When we left her she was in the ridiculous position of steaming ahead full power without moving an inch. All the troops were sent to Her Majesty's ship the old *Bellerophon*, or *Belly-ruffin* as Jack-tar called her, then a hulk in the harbour.

The ship was docked and the damage repaired in a few days. The injured powder and stores were replaced, and we again started for China. She had always been an ill-fated ship. When she had taken the Houses of Parliament to the great Naval Review held the preceding year at the end of the Crimean War, she had broken down hopelessly during the operation. I believe she was obliged to have new machinery put into her in consequence.

Nothing daunted by our first "false start" we tried again, and were soon in very bad weather in the Channel. It blew

hard, and everything that could go wrong in her did so, and everybody was thoroughly uncomfortable on board. I have always pitied our rank and file when at sea, especially when on board a Royal Navy ship, which is to the British private the acme of discomfort. He is a much happier man on board a hired transport, for in the latter every one is kind to him.

The *Transit* was a wretched sea vessel; she rolled heavily and "made bad weather of it" in the rough sea we encountered in the Channel. But what was still worse, she was so badly rigged that her shrouds soon began to flop loosely about the masts on the side she alternately heeled over towards in her long rolls. The consequence was, that the masts wobbled about pretty freely, and it looked at one time as if they must have gone overboard. Lashings were passed round the shrouds of each mast at some distance below the "tops," and by thus drawing them into the mast, the portion below these lashings became sufficiently tight to keep the mast in position. But this was only a temporary relief, and the captain at last resolved to run in for Corunna, the nearest port, for the purpose of refitting there.

We were all glad to get into harbour once more. What a relief after the intolerable discomfort we had undergone for the three previous days. We already began to realize that H.M.S. *Transit* was an unlucky craft indeed. Corunna in bad April weather is not an enticing seaside resort. But I was delighted to have the chance of visiting the scene of Sir John Moore's death—his last and well fought battle. He has always been to me one of our greatest heroes as well as one of our very ablest generals; a man who thoroughly understood the theory of war and knew well how to apply it in practice.

As soon as I landed I hastened to the position where Moore gave battle to the pursuing French army. What a crowd of thoughts, recollections and aspirations passed through my brain when I stood upon the very spot where, forty-eight years before, in the cold month of January, that great soldier had fallen in the hour of victory.

The position did not strike me as a strong one for an army so small as his was, though it was the best to be found there.

As I stood where this great commander fell and thought of his deathless reputation, my brain, my whole being was stirred more than ever with the boyish wish that I too might end my days upon some well fought field of battle. What a privilege so to die for England! "You know that I always wished to die this way" were amongst the last words Moore ever uttered.

The day I was at Corunna the weather was cold and dull, moist and sunless, but not so cold as when the battle was fought. Dark grey clouds were moving quickly through a heavily-laden Biscayan atmosphere when I reached the rampart of the citadel where the men who trusted and believed in their beloved leader had buried him by night. They left "him alone in his glory," but the English Ministers, the paid guardians of our national honour, left his grave to become a ruin. It was painful to find his last resting-place thus neglected by the nation for whose honour and reputation he had died. I felt how differently the ancients would have testified their admiration for such a national hero who gave all he had to give, his life, to an ungrateful country.

As I paused by this soldier's grave, I realized that no neglect by Ministers could rob such a man of his fame nor dull his glory. Although the remains of his political detractors may lie in "dull cold marble," who even remembers their

names? Who cares for the memory of Mr. Frere, whose advice he so wisely refused to follow, whilst the name and the fame of the hero whose bones lie in that neglected grave on the Corunna ramparts will live for ever as a glorious asset in the treasure-house of our national glory. All honour to the noble-minded Spanish general who showed his respect for Moore's memory by erecting a tomb over his grave.

A close professional examination of this campaign and of Moore's character and ability have often made me ask myself, if he had lived to return home in health and strength should we ever have heard of Wellington, greater and abler though he was in all respects than the hero who lies buried at Corunna?

Major Barnston and I had between us purchased Jomini's *History of Napoleon* and many other military works on war before starting, and we both studied them hard in our respective cabins. But as long voyages bear a strong resemblance one to another I shall not attempt to describe ours in the ill-fated *Transit*. We coaled at St. Vincent, where we found the *Himalaya* similarly employed. I went on board of her to see my brother officers and to compare notes on the events of the voyage. She was then being warped-in from where she had at first anchored to a buoy nearer shore for greater convenience in coaling. As I walked the quarter deck with a friend, the hawser employed in this operation parted; and she began at once to drift towards the shore. The captain, who was on deck, sang out to let go some particular anchor, and it was done at once with true man-of-war rapidity. But if ever there was a striking illustration of the proverb, "*l'homme propose, mais Dieu dispose*" this was one, for the anchor instead of going to the bottom fell into an iron coal barge then fastened alongside. No other anchor was ready, and

the ship began to drift broadside-on towards the shore. It was an ugly moment, and one said inwardly, "What next?" Providentially, there was a brig at anchor between us and the land, and it was evident we must strike her before our ship could be on shore. This must have occurred to Captain Chambers, of the *Transit*, whose gig was alongside, for he was quickly on board the doomed brig, and with his boat's crew succeeded in checking the *Himalaya* as she collided with the brig by slowly paying-out that little craft's cable, until at last she foundered. Sufficient time was thus, however, gained to enable the *Himalaya* to "make sail" before she sank the brig. It was a touch and go escape, for as the *Himalaya* stood slowly outwards from the harbour under sail—she had no steam up—we were not over a stone's throw from the shore.

We put into Simon's Town, where we stayed a few days, and I had one or two pretty rides in the neighbourhood of Cape Town on fairly good hired horses, and my "stable companion" on board—the best of comrades—went out daily with his gun over the rough, wild land near Simon's Town. He was a very good naturalist—and may he live long to be so still—and was always in search of strange birds and animals. A few days after we had left the Cape, I remarked a horrible smell in our cabin, and upon sniffing about, I found it came from the skin of a wild cat carefully pinned upon a board to dry. In my anger I threw it overboard. No allusion was ever made to it, but our relations were somewhat strained for a few days. He was, however, too good a fellow to bear ill-will.

Just as we were leaving the Cape a strange rumour was in the air, though no one could say whence it came nor by whom it was first put about. It was, that the native army of India

had mutinied. I was the only man on board who had ever been in India, and I distinctly recall the fact of having been appealed to in consequence as an authority on the subject, and asked if I believed it. My service in India had been short, but short as it was I had often heard old Indians scout the possibility of Mohammedans and Hindoos ever combining to make common cause against their Christian rulers. My answer was consequently in harmony with this belief.

After leaving the Cape, we followed the usual sailing ship's course, making due east towards the uninhabited little island of Amsterdam. The weather was stormy in those low latitudes, and the seas were high, until at last we ran into or were overtaken by a cyclone. It is commonly supposed that most if not all the East Indiamen that have been lost eastward of the Cape have gone down in these terrific "circular storms," and we very nearly did so. Our mainyard snapped in two, and sails after sails, as they were set, were rent in pieces. We had already an unsafe amount of water in the hold, and it began to be whispered that we had sprung a leak. This soon became an ascertained fact, and it was discovered there was a rent over twenty feet long in the iron plates of the ship below watermark. Every pump was kept going, and had the gale lasted much longer we should never have been heard of again, for during the twenty-four hours we had pumped out some five hundred tons of water from the hold.[1]

[1] A naval officer who was then on board this wretched ship wrote to me in recent years to say that it was, under Providence, the engine-room pumps which saved the ship from foundering in mid-ocean. That had we not been wrecked at Banca, any attempt to have taken her across the sea from Singapore to Hong Kong would have been reckless, as "the iron plates were hourly getting looser and looser." He added that when the captain made his periodical inspections of the engine-room, "he repeatedly requested that the sinking condition of the ship might not be told to any of the military

SMOOTH WATER IN THE TROPICS

But in the midst of all this danger we had some fun. There was a doctor of high medical rank on board whose nerves had given way amongst the many trials this unseaworthy ship exposed us to. The cyclone was too much for him. But he met with no sympathy from us light-hearted young men. We took pleasure in carrying on conversations within his hearing describing how the leak had spread to thirty feet in length, and that each time the vessel rolled one could peer into the green sea through the yawning aperture. It was amusing to us but unfeelingly cruel to the poor nervous doctor. I feel ashamed as I think of our behaviour towards him.

The weather brightened as we entered the Tropics, and as we stood north towards the Strait of Sunda between Java and Sumatra, the sea became as smooth as the proverbial millpond.

officers; the iron plates of the ship in the wake of the masts were working quite loose, and rivets all but useless, the sea rushing in in vast quantities."

CHAPTER XVII

Shipwrecked in Straits of Banca—News that Bengal Army had Mutinied—Arrive in Calcutta, 1857

THE naval officers of the ship told us their charts of the seas and islands lying between the Straits of Sunda and Singapore were inexact and bad. We passed through the Strait July 9, 1857, and the captain decided to proceed through the Straits of Banca, between the island of that name to the east and Sumatra to the west. The straits to the east of Banca, named Gaspar, were badly laid down on the charts, and were studded with rocks, each bearing the name of the ship that had foundered upon it. After breakfast I went on deck and found we had entered the Straits of Banca. It was a lovely still day, not a ripple disturbed the mirror-like surface of the sea. I was lighting my cigar from that of a brother officer when I was shot forward upon him by the ship having suddenly stopped dead. The masts shook as if they would go overboard. The *Transit* had struck a rock, and in an instant had become absolutely stationary.

The bugles sounded our regimental call, and we all ran down to our men who were still below cleaning-up after their breakfast. All the troops were carried on the main deck, except one company, which was on the deck below it and

situated well forward. It was a horrible quarter below the water level, and lit only by one solitary candle lanthorne. Each company took it for a week in turn, and it was my company's luck to be the unfortunate occupants when the ship struck. Upon reaching that dreadful lower region I fell the men in, half on one side, the other half on the opposite side of the deck. I told them there was no danger—an allowable fib which I hope the recording angel did not enter upon my "defaulter sheet," adding that no man upon any account was to open his lips unless I spoke to him.

There we stood in deadly silence, and I know not for how long. The abominable candle in the lanthorne sputtered and went out. We were in almost absolute darkness, our only glimmer of light coming down through a very small hatchway which was reached by a narrow ladder. The ship began to sink by the stern, so it was evident to all thinking minds that we hung on a rock somewhere forward. The angle of our deck with the sea level above us became gradually greater, until at last we all had to hold on to the sides of our dark submarine prison. I remember my own sensations then as well as I do what occurred to me yesterday. My predominant feeling was of horrid repugnance at the possibility, which at last became the probability, of being drowned in the dark, like a rat in a trap. I should have liked to have had a swim for my life at the last, the supreme moment, but that would be impossible if the abominable ship should slip off the rock.

> "If Greece must perish, I Thy will obey,
> But let me perish in the face of day."

The only aperture even to the main deck, as I have already described, was very small, and most eyes were

kept riveted upon it. I am sure that every man now alive who was there must shudder as he thinks of what seemed to all of us the interminable time we were in that pit. Every minute seemed an hour, but at last a face appeared at the aperture ordering us on deck. What a relief to us to be once more in the open air with a clear blue sky overhead, even though the ship moaned and creaked ominously, as if to warn us that she must soon break her back and disappear for ever into those depths known only to sharks and mermaids.

Very fortunately for us, there was about three-quarters of a mile from where the ship struck a long, low coral reef, which rose in the centre to a height of some fifteen feet above its general level. With a man-of-war's crew and plenty of soldiers to help, every boat in the ship was soon afloat, well provided with water and provisions, and all laden with soldiers bound for this reef. How differently affairs would have gone for us had we been in a mere merchant vessel hired for the occasion as a transport.

What a boon to man is discipline! If I could afford it, I would erect a monument to that most admirable of soldierly virtues. It is based on faith, for without faith in your superiors all discipline is but as an apple of the Dead Sea in the mouth: it is only an outward form filled with dust.

Everything connected with our landing went like clockwork, and although our unlucky captain was never given another ship, those who saw him that day, from the moment the *Transit* struck until every man was safely out of her, felt the greatest respect for his cool courage and his calm unruffled behaviour throughout. He gave his orders clearly and deliberately as if it were an ordinary shipwreck

practice parade. Few of us had ever spoken to him during the voyage, and as none of us knew him, we never troubled ourselves about him and cared nothing for him. He was to us an instrument whose business it was to get us to China, just as it was that of the steam engine on board to work us there. But when we saw how he acted in an emergency, which—coming after his previous mishap in the Solent—must be his professional funeral, we could not help admiring and pitying him.

I have always been a superstitious believer in luck, and the end of the *Transit* and of those connected with her went far to strengthen in me that illogical faith. She had always been an ill-starred ship. As we pulled away from her sinking wreck we were glad to think that the Admiralty could never again send troops in that wretched craft.

We were soon safely huddled together—one thousand men in all—upon this coral reef, which was only about three degrees south of the Equator. The heat was intense, for there was no wind, and the sun streamed upon us with a skull-piercing ferocity through our regimental forage caps. The sailors, however, did not seem to mind it, and worked all day with untiring energy with less protection for their heads. They set us a good example of uncomplaining endurance under trying circumstances.

In the midst of our hard work that day, so willingly undertaken by all ranks, I must not forget an incident that even at such a moment afforded us much amusement. I have already mentioned an old nervous medical officer as a passenger, and this day must have been to him one of superlative misery. He left the ship in the first boat that carried any soldiers to the reef I have mentioned.

It was about an acre in extent, and there he ensconced himself for some time. It presented a flat coral surface, with a little rising ground in the centre. When he had landed the tide was low, though flowing, but in a short time it began to overflow the flat surface of the reef. This was somewhat alarming, so he once more shifted his position to the higher ground. But the tide began to invade this also, and every quarter of an hour it came nearer and nearer to his feet. The imminent danger of drowning, and of being torn by sharks, began to affect him, but what could be done ? Where could he find safety ? A brilliant idea apparently struck him ; why not get into and stay in one of the boats then engaged in plying between the reef and the wreck with stores and provisions ? No sooner thought of than done, and into the stern sheets of a boat he conveyed that body to which he alone amongst us attached any value. But leave that position he would not and did not until, night coming on, all boats repaired to the island of Banca, some two miles distant. He saved his life, and in doing so afforded us all much amusement, and we wanted something to amuse us at the moment. I do not know what became of him after we had started for Singapore, but I hope it may not be my bad luck to be associated with him in any moment of danger or hour of trial in the next world.

Before I reached the island in the evening it was found that we had landed close by a nice little stream of good fresh water. I was at once set to work to construct a dam across it to prevent the sea running up at high tide, and this I did successfully. We set all hands to work at making temporary shelters for our men ; they were easily and quickly constructed, as the jungle afforded

ample materials. For the first two days most of us lived chiefly on pineapples, of which there were quantities near the beach. No animals but monkeys were to be seen, and at first no traces of man to be found anywhere. Many tried boiled monkey in the hodge-podge of salt pork, salt beef and beans we stewed all day for dinner. As we partook of this horrible mixture each of us persuaded himself that he was eating the salt-junk whilst his neighbour fed on the baboon.

The jungle came down to the edge of the sea beach along the coast where we had landed, and we soon found little paths through it which were duly explored. One or two houses built on piles, after the fashion of the locality, were discovered, and at last a few inhabitants were encountered. Beyond some cocks and hens nothing was to be obtained from them.

How beautiful it looked, how refreshing and reposeful to the eyes of those lately out from the stormy, angry seas of latitude 38° south. Gutta-percha trees of great size abounded, and amongst their branches swarms of big monkeys disported themselves, grinning at the northern barbarians who had invaded their territory. Great numbers of parrots, of all sizes and of every bright hue, eyed us cunningly from every point of vantage, making us realize that we had not been cast upon an absolutely desert island. We afterwards discovered that where we landed was the spot upon which a British force had disembarked in 1811, though we could find no traces of their having done so. The little stream of water may, however, have been the reason why it was selected for the purpose.

Very soon after the *Transit* had foundered, a boat had been dispatched to Minto, the chief town of the island,

for assistance, and a Dutch gunboat accordingly made its appearance next morning to protect us and our wreck. The Dutch authorities at Minto also sent a gunboat to communicate the news of our disaster to the authorities at Singapore.

As long as we remained on the island we kept our men at work improving their bivouac, and the sailors brought us sails from the wreck which made comfortable tents. I was much better off than most of us, for when going over the side of the *Transit* after my company had got into the boats, my curious and amusing Irish servant came to me and said with a sort of wink, "Never mind me, sor, I will stay and try to bring you off some of your things." When he rejoined me on shore he handed to me eighty odd sovereigns, a couple of watches and some trinkets he knew were in an old dressing case that had belonged to my father, and, what was even more valuable, he had emptied his knapsack of all his own things, and had filled it with my flannel shirts, towels, pocket handkerchiefs, etc. I think, my readers, you will admit that our rank and file, not pertinently but impertinently styled "tommies," are really the best fellows in the world! At least I know them to be so, and all my young days when I lived amongst them in the field I had good reason for my belief in them, not only as soldiers of the Queen but as personal friends of my own. The next day a sailor brought me a blue dressing-gown I had used on board the *Transit*. He had found it floating about in the ship. It was subsequently one of the very few articles that formed my kit when I crossed the Ganges by the bridge of boats at Cawnpore on the following October 21, *en route* for the Alum Bagh, near Lucknow.

MUTINY OF BENGAL ARMY

After a busy stay of some ten days on the Island of Banca, the *Dove* gunboat arrived from Singapore to look after our welfare. Her arrival was a memorable event in my life, for she brought the astounding news—confirming the mysterious rumour we had heard at Capetown—that the Bengal sepoys had mutinied, had murdered their officers and restored the Mahommedan rule at Delhi. The great Mogul, who had been so long a sort of *Roi-fainéant* in our hands, had been proclaimed as sovereign ruler of all Hindostan. I can remember no event that ever gave Englishmen at home and abroad so great a national shock. The Hindoo considered the Mussulman to be as unclean a creature as his own white master, and the "true believer in one God" only, despised the Brahmin as an idolater. That the men of two such very antagonistic religions should have combined and made common cause against British rule seemed incomprehensible. Yet so it was. We had long pampered this Bengal sepoy, as Sir Charles Napier bluntly told the gentlemen who ruled India from Threadneedle Street. But his warnings had served no useful purpose. They only brought down upon him the bitter enmity of the Quoi-Hai community both in England and in India.

We also learnt from the *Dove* the joyful intelligence that the destination of the 90th Light Infantry had been diverted from China to Calcutta. That was indeed good news for all of us.

In due course, H.M.S. *Actæon* arrived. She was a sailing vessel employed on surveying duties, and had men of science on board. It was a luxury to be once more in comfortable quarters in the cleanest of ships. She landed us at Singapore on July 23, where I first made

John Chinaman's acquaintance, and found him a most interesting fellow in every way. We were put into some large huts recently erected as a small-pox hospital, where we quickly made the men fairly comfortable. Singapore was then a great commercial port and swarmed with pig-tailed men from Hong-Kong and Canton, and indeed with all sorts and conditions of Europeans and Asiatics. After a week's stay at that interesting city, our three companies embarked in H.M. ships *Pearl* and *Shannon*, my company being in the former. We started from our small-pox hospital at 4 a.m. July 30, for the quay where we were to embark. It was a distance of about a couple of miles, but it seemed a long one, for it poured as if Heaven's sluice-gates had been opened upon us. When we reached our ship we were as wet as if we had swum that distance to her. Everybody on board vied in lending us dry clothes and in making all ranks comfortable. The captain had received orders to make all possible haste in getting to Calcutta, for every white soldier that could be landed there at that moment was worth much gold.

We were all anxiety to get there and overtake our head-quarters and the seven companies who had already started for it. "The more haste the worse speed" was fully borne out in our case, for every sort of trouble seemed to be in store for us. We began by losing a man over-board, then another who belonged to the party that tried to lower a boat to his assistance. We "knocked about" for three days in the neighbourhood of the "Sand Heads," before we could obtain a pilot to take us up the difficult passage of the Hooghley River. At last we found one, and reached our destination in safety, but too late to catch our headquarters: they had already started up the river

in boats towed by steamers. We anchored off a big ghat, or landing place, off the native city, amidst a vast crowd of native boats laden with fish, fruit and vegetables for sale. Our captain fired twenty-one guns as a salute to the Union Jack flying over the grassy slopes of Fort William. It was an unusual proceeding, for men-of-war very seldom went up the Hooghley. When the first gun was fired all the boats round us were to be seen flying in every direction, many even were abandoned, the crew having jumped overboard in panic, believing it was the intention of this great sea monster to take immediate vengeance upon the native inhabitants for the atrocious murders and cruelties committed by the sepoys "up country." The vast crowds that thronged the banks to see the war vessel fled, as if for their lives, to obtain cover from the vengeful Englishmen's shot and shell with which they assumed our guns were loaded. To the soldiers on board, always prepared to laugh heartily at cowardice thus shamelessly acknowledged, this afforded great amusement.

The guns that now welcomed us—part of the first regiment that landed in India for the suppression of this dreadful Mutiny—were fired from a spot close to where one of the most tragic events in our Indian history had been enacted. What Englishman has not heard of the "Black Hole of Calcutta"? The barbarous crime there perpetrated by the fiend Surajah-Dowlah led immediately to the battle of Plassey, which, fought just a hundred years before, may be said to have inaugurated our great Indian Empire of to-day. We were told that the old Indian prophecy that our rule in Hindostan would last a century had had much to do in bringing about the great Mutiny of 1857. This may have

been the case, but I don't think the prophecy would have been realized had those who ruled the Bengal army been blessed with a sounder knowledge of men and known better how to govern soldiers. Under a Charles Napier as Commander-in-Chief it would not, I think, have been possible.

The condition of things in Calcutta when we arrived was not pleasant. The native troops there and in the neighbouring districts had been disarmed and knew they were suspected. Many timid ladies slept each night in Fort William, and it was said that some always carried poison about them to take in case of emergency. Others went to bed with revolvers under their pillows, and practised with them daily at a mark. In these days of peace it is not easy to realize fully the fears experienced then by our countrywomen in India. Many of those who had been up country when the first murders were committed had already reached Calcutta, and their stories of hair-breadth escapes, and of the miseries they had endured in their flight, were heartrending. The local newspapers abounded in tales of murder and of crimes that made the blood boil.

The morning after our arrival, a river steamer with a "flat" attached to it came alongside, and into this we were all transferred. Beyond our arms and accoutrements we really had no baggage, so we were quickly under way up stream for Chinsura, a station about forty miles by rail above Calcutta; I have already mentioned it in an early chapter. There we remained until the last week of August, busily engaged in re-clothing our men, and in serving out new arms, those we had brought from home having been damaged by salt water during the wreck. Everything

was new to all ranks. We had not a native servant amongst us, and none could speak Hindostanee. But we were all young and lighthearted, and what does youth care for difficulties ?

From the upper provinces there came daily news of more regiments having mutinied and killed their officers. Up to the last moment too many of those devoted Englishmen had stoutly refused to believe their men meant mischief. It was to this noble quality of absolute faith in the loyalty of their men that most of these brutal murders were attributable.

The stories our men heard daily of the barbarities practised by the mutineers upon women and children, especially of those that had taken place at Cawnpore, inflamed their minds to a degree it is now difficult to realize. I can speak from experience as to my own company during its long march of over 500 miles, from Raneegunj to Cawnpore. During the night they often caught armed patrols of our native police, and when I released them, explaining who they were, I many times heard my men grumble because "the captain had let off another lot of those d—d niggers."

Sir Colin Campbell reached Calcutta about the middle of August, 1857, when the outlook in India was extremely gloomy. The Bengal sepoy had been long pampered by his officers. Some years previously, Sir Charles Napier had proposed to disband the worst of them, and to bring up all ranks of the remainder "with a round turn." But he was hounded down by the Indian Government as a sort of incapable madman. He was, however, a great soldier and knew well what he was about, whilst they were blinded and either would not or could not see the condition into

which the Bengal army had fallen. They pooh-poohed the assertion that it had lost its old fighting qualities and had become discontented. An officer who was on the staff during one of our Sikh wars told me not long after the event, that during one of their hard fought battles in the Punjaub, the colonel of a sepoy regiment came to his general and in whining tones said, "My regiment, Sir, has been cut to pieces!" "Has cut-away you mean and be d—d to them!" was the general's reply. My informant added they all turned up when the battle was over.

Our battles in India before the Mutiny were almost all won by the British soldiers of either the Royal or the Company's service. But the despatches describing those battles were too often filled with glowing encomiums upon the valour and steadiness of the sepoy. From their perusal the ignorant might not even have gathered in some cases that any white private soldiers had been present.

Major Barnston, who had known Sir Colin in the Crimea, went to see him in Calcutta within a few days of his arrival, and met with a cordial reception. In the course of conversation upon the selection of staff officers, Sir Colin said that the East India Company had been given a long trial, and that its rulers, civil and military, were directly responsible for the Mutiny. He added that as the Indian officers had thus failed it was his intention now to give the officers of the Queen's Army a turn to see if they could not do better.

An army of Asiatic mercenaries is always a dangerous army, even though it have English officers; but it is worse when its former military spirit has deserted the rank and file, for it is then useless as well. This was to a great

extent the condition of the regular Bengal army when it mutinied.

Few remember now how very serious was the position that Sir Colin had to face when he reached Calcutta. At no previous period in her history had India—I use the word as a geographical designation of our Eastern Empire—been so deeply, so generally excited. From Peshawur to Cape Comorin all classes in Hindostan, from the royal rulers in Delhi, to the humblest ryot who tilled the paddy fields of Bengal, all felt the shock of this Mutiny. How merciful the Great Ruler of all worlds was to us as a nation in postponing this dire calamity until we had finished our war with Russia. Without doubt, as a nation possessing great fighting instincts, we should have manfully faced the double misfortune, but it must have very seriously strained our resources.

To dwell upon what I conceive to have been the causes which, extending over about twenty years, led, little by little, to the military revolt, would be beyond the scope of these memoirs. I content myself with saying that I thought in 1857, and think so still, that the Mutiny was the direct outcome of the foolish mode in which the Bengal sepoy had been over-indulged by the Indian military authorities.

In August, 1857, the Doab, Rohilkund and the North-West Provinces generally were practically in the hands of the mutinous native soldiers. Meerut and the forts of Allahabad and Agra were still ours, and Cawnpore was held by the handful of British "lame ducks" whom Outram and Havelock had left there when they marched for Lucknow. Except that last-named city, and the little post at the Alum Bagh near it, both held by insufficient

garrisons, all Oudh was occupied by the enemy, and its warlike inhabitants were in arms against us. The Gwalior contingent had not yet revolted, but rebellion had spread over the greater portion of Central India.

Our power in the Bengal Presidency had so dwindled away that in order to communicate with Delhi Sir Colin Campbell, whilst at Calcutta, had to send his orders round by Bombay, whence they passed up the Indus into the Punjaub, and thence to the Mogul capital.

The sepoy troops who had mutinied at Dinapore had for some time blocked the Grand Trunk Road between Allahabad and Calcutta. But my battalion and the Northumberland Fusiliers, on their way to Cawnpore, had already cleared away that obstruction. However, as long as we could continue to hold Allahabad and Cawnpore on the Ganges, we possessed two good bases from which to operate against Oudh. The former was, for India, a ,strong fortress, and could be reached by steamer from Calcutta in from twenty to thirty days. By road it was only about 500 miles from Calcutta, of which 112 miles, as far as Raneegunj, could be done by rail.

CHAPTER XVIII

Forced March from Chinsura to Cawnpore 1857

THE great Mutiny of the Bengal native army in 1857 took the English world by surprise. We had no serious warning that any such terrible trial, with its attendant horrors and misfortunes, was in store for us.

My readers should remember that the Mutiny of 1857 was by no means the first we had had in India. Only half a century before two native battalions at Vellore, near Madras, had mutinied and murdered their officers, a detachment of white soldiers, and a number of the India Company's civil servants. Fortunately an excellent officer, Colonel Gillespie, of the King's 19th Dragoons, was at hand, who attacked the mutineers and killed some 800 of them. Other mutinies had been arranged to take place that same day, but the sepoy regiments concerned were disarmed in good time.

In 1824 a regiment of Bengal native infantry refused to go to Burmah. When ordered to "ground arms" on parade, in consequence of their refusal to embark, they took no notice of the order. General Sir Edward Paget, then present, was however equal to the occasion. He opened fire upon them with canister, and they fled for their lives.

Upon more recent occasions of mutiny, whenever the Commander-in-Chief in India felt it necessary to adopt serious measures, the Court of Directors in London invariably strove to pooh-pooh the necessity for them. They scoffingly described the commander on the spot as an "alarmist," and his action was generally decried at home as an evidence of his want of sympathy with the sepoys under his command. Such action on their part could not be too strongly condemned. In an army of aliens, acting in their own country in the midst of their friends and relatives, indeed of a whole population who loathed and abhorred the religion and daily habits of their officers, there must be no delay, no hesitation to nip in the bud all incipient mutiny. The hand of iron in a soft silk glove can alone keep such an army in order at any time. But the East India directors, far removed from the pulse of the native population, refused as a rule to recognize the necessity for ever letting the sepoys feel that the glove held within it an iron hand. They were never prepared to act promptly and vigorously when disaffection in any shape was shown by even a section of their native troops. We won India by the sword, and whilst humanity and a Christian spirit incites us at all times to do what we can to make the sepoy and the people generally happy, prosperous and contented, that sword must be always kept sharp and ready for use at any moment.

Whatever may have been the usually recognized theories as to the best methods for the good government of India, the directors were always very hard upon the general in India who took immediate action to nip mutiny in the bud by any strong measures. Their conduct towards Sir Charles Napier when he disbanded a regiment for

mutinous conduct illustrates what I mean. They desired to hush this matter up by persuading the world that this alleged mutiny existed only in the brain of the English general, whom they feared and disliked. He was, I may say, practically recalled in consequence, being condemned as an alarmist. Fate had in store for them, however, the disagreeable necessity of being compelled by the great Duke of Wellington to accept him subsequently as the Commander-in-Chief for India. This was in 1849, when the disastrous battle of Chillianwallah seemed for the moment to have placed in jeopardy our rule over all India.

When this great Mutiny burst upon us in 1857, the force of white troops in India consisted of about 26,000 men of the Queen's cavalry and infantry regiments—no Royal Artillery then served in India—and there were some 12,000 local European artillery and infantry belonging to the East India Company. All the Company's cavalry were natives. The regular native army of India was about 200,000 strong, raised in three distinct forces, and called after the three Presidencies to which they respectively belonged. In addition to these forces there were a considerable number of Irregular Regiments of horse and foot, those belonging to the Bengal Presidency being mostly raised after the Sikh War of 1849. These Punjaub regiments consisted of fine fighting men, soldiers by instinct and by birth; Pathans, Punjaubee Mussulmans, Sikhs and even Afridees from beyond our frontiers. The officers for these regiments, carefully selected from the whole army in India, were generally the best men to be found in it, or indeed I might say in any army. These regiments of Irregulars remained strictly faithful to us throughout all the vicissitudes of the dreadful Mutiny, and no men

ever fought more gallantly than they did under the remarkable officers selected to lead them. Under men like Sir Dighton Probyn, Sam Brown, Hodson, Wilde, Vaughan and other famous leaders, they could be depended upon to go anywhere and attempt anything. But what soldiers, British or native, would not fight under a leader like Dighton Probyn? Of him it might indeed be said that he was a host in himself. The most modest of men, he was remarkable, even amongst brave men, for cool pluck and splendid daring at a time when the Bengal army possessed many of the most dashing leaders who ever fought for Queen Victoria.

Up to the date of Sir Colin Campbell's arrival in August, 1857, the British reinforcements had only reached Calcutta in driblets, which were quickly used up along the line of communications by the civil commissioners of districts. He now began to collect these little detachments into battalions. But he was besieged by "officers of every rank anxious to be sent at least as divisional commanders and at the head of small columns independent of all control."[1] He found that the civil authorities along the one great line of communication between Calcutta and Cawnpore interfered much with the progress of his troops towards the latter city. These district commissioners were doubtless quite correct in believing that revolt was brewing around them and that it might burst into an angry reality at any moment. It was natural, therefore, that each and all of them should wish to retain some British troops in their immediate neighbourhood. But when the whole of a great country is very much in a similar condition it is

[1] Letter from Sir Colin Campbell to Sir Henry Lawrence of September 12, 1857.

the " big soldier " alone who, taking a broad comprehensive view of the whole position, can best decide where and how he shall dispose his possibly insufficient forces to the greatest advantage.

Delhi was at this time besieged by a gallant but inadequate British force, and it could not be assaulted until the expected arrival of General Nicholson with reinforcements.

By September 2 a battalion of the Northumberland Fusiliers, seven companies of my battalion of the 90th Light Infantry, together with Major Eyre's battery, making in all a force of six guns and over 1,200 bayonets, reached Allahabad to join Outram and Havelock. This column pushed forward to Cawnpore and fought their way thence into Lucknow, literally at the point of the bayonet, upon which occasion my battalion suffered considerably.[1]

There were few railways in India then, though some great lines had been planned. One along the right bank of the Hooghley River had been already begun that was intended eventually to connect our furthest provinces with Calcutta. As yet, however, it had only reached Raneegunj, 120 miles from Calcutta. The two great navigable rivers, the Ganges and the Indus, were the highways along which our troops annually travelled from Calcutta and from Kurachee into the interior. The headquarters of my battalion had gone up country by the former in steamers which towed big flats behind them. But that river was

[1] In the eight weeks between the date when the Headquarters of the 90th Light Infantry reached the Alum Bagh, until the three Companies of that Battalion under Major Barnston opened out communications with the Lucknow Residency on November 17, 1857, we lost in officers, 9 killed, 7 wounded—16 total. In the nearly forty weeks whilst employed at the Siege of Sebastopol, our loss in officers was only 4 killed, 13 wounded—17 total.

now, late in August, already low and was still falling, making any movements of troops over it uncertain. It was therefore determined to send our three *Transit* companies by rail from Chinsura to Raneegunj, and thence by road to Benares, Allahabad and Cawnpore to join our Headquarters in Oudh.

The Grand Trunk Road over which we were to travel was a splendid work. It extended from Calcutta to Cawnpore, Lucknow, Agra, Delhi, the North-West Provinces and the Punjaub. No body of troops had marched over it between Calcutta and Allahabad since the Bengal native army had mutinied, and from most of the districts through which it passed the judges and other civil officials had been driven away. We were warned of positions said to be held by the enemy upon it, and were told that we should certainly have to fight at some places, but our instructions were to reach Cawnpore at the earliest possible date. This was an unnecessary instruction, for from the Commanding Officer to our smallest Bugler, all ranks and all ages longed to push forward and get at the throats of those who had brutally murdered English women and children.

One company at a time was to move, with a day's interval between each, and to travel at night by what was then known as "Bullock Dak," at the rate of about thirty miles a night. The sun would have been trying to our men at that season, and we should never have been able to get our bullocks along during the hot hours of daylight. It was hoped we should thus reach Benares in twelve night marches. Each wagon was covered in and drawn by two little bullocks. One was allotted to every two officers and one to every six men. Of these six men, two at a time

in turn, watch about, were to be always on foot, so no wagon ever had more than four men in it at a time. One third of the company, with its proportion of officers, would thus be always on the road and ready to fight at any moment. By this system of reliefs no man would actually march on foot more than ten miles in the twenty-four hours. We were to find fresh bullocks at every ten miles —so it was said—and to halt all the day at specified staging houses, commonly known as "Dak Bungalows."

A six-pounder gun was given over to me, for which I was to find gunners from my company.

In accordance with the orders I received, I marched my company—about 100 Rank and File—to the Chinsura railway station on the evening of August 29, 1857.

Upon reaching that station I found there was no door wide enough to allow my six-pounder to pass through to the platform. It was too late to dismount it, as the train was expected immediately. The station-master, a half-caste who spoke English, said that if I would take it down the line some three or four miles I should find a cutting where he thought I might manage to get it on a truck. This I felt to be equally out of the question, so I determined to pull down one side of the doorway that led into the station, and thus make the opening wide enough for the gun. The poor half-caste stationmaster was dumfounded. "His voice clung to his jaws" with horror at the mere suggestion, and his yellow complexion seemed to grow paler with each blow from the crowbar of my stalwart pioneer upon the doorpost. My poor railway official, finding that neither remonstrance nor warnings, almost amounting to threats, had any effect, at last contented himself with begging I would give him

a certificate that I had committed this crime, for such it was in his opinion. This of course I did. We parted amicably. I never heard any more about the matter afterwards, though expecting to receive a bill from the East India Company for "one railway station wantonly destroyed, etc., etc."

In due course our train reached the terminus at Raneegunj, where I found our bullock wagons and their nervous, frightened drivers awaiting our arrival. Not one of my party could speak a sentence of Hindostanee. I found, however, a half-caste apothecary waiting for us there with a box of physic in case of accidents. Although we never found it necessary to test his medical knowledge, he was very useful as an interpreter throughout the long march to Cawnpore that we began that evening. Like all his brethren, he was absolutely wanting in energy and power of decision. I don't think he took any soporific drug, but his expression always seemed to indicate that he had either been very recently asleep or was longing to sleep, or perhaps both of those conditions of mind and body together. Neither my four subalterns nor I had a native servant amongst us, so our soldier servants did for us all we required, and that was very little. We had no baggage, as all we possessed had gone down in H.M.S. *Transit*, and we had merely bought in Calcutta the small amount of clothing necessary for an out-of-door life in a tropical climate. It is curious how little suffices for that purpose, as Sir Charles Napier insisted when taking the field himself. I well remember Tenniel's cartoon in *Punch* of that distinguished general mounted on a camel, when suddenly ordered to take the command in India after our disastrous victory at Chillianwallah. His kit was represented as packed in a small

bundle and described as consisting merely of a spare shirt, a towel, a piece of soap, and some few other necessary articles. He had previously asserted publicly that some such kit was ample for all campaigning purposes. Those who knew him, even by sight, thought he might have omitted the soap.

At the moment, however, none of us thought much of kits or personal comforts. We saw many things of great interest to the ordinary traveller on our road to Cawnpore. Beautiful Hindoo temples that had existed there in ages when our barbarian forebears, clad in skins, had hunted wolves on Cannock Chase. We passed mosques that had been built by the Mahometan conquerors of India many centuries before to celebrate their victories: but we had then no time or inclination to admire, much less to examine the splendid creations of former Indian rulers: we took no interest in such matters; our work was with the mutinous sepoys who had been "unfaithful to their salt," had murdered English women and children, and for their blood we were consequently athirst. To avenge the murder of our officers was not in our thoughts. Their business was to face death in all forms, and to die like gentlemen when necessary, and the officers of our Indian army did so most nobly upon all occasions throughout this appalling Mutiny. But the remembrance of the treatment our women and children had received at the hands of these fiends roused all our worst instincts. Of what interest could be the scenery or the history of the country we marched through to soldiers who thought only of vengeance, and of their comrades then besieged in Lucknow some 700 miles away. Let us get there as quickly as possible; we talked of nothing else. We discussed whether

we should be in time to join General Havelock in his intended relief of Lucknow, and never wearied of the theme.

Our daily marches averaged from twenty to thirty miles, made mostly in the dark. It was the rainy season, and those who have seen how it can rain in Bengal will understand the condition in which we frequently reached our halting places. The rivers were in flood, and crossing them by night was often no easy matter. At some we had to halt for hours before they subsided sufficiently to admit of our fording them.

The river Soane was then about two miles in width, and in it I spent the whole night, as did all my four subalterns also, often up to the neck, pushing and hauling to get our bullock carts over. All ranks worked hard, for all were equally anxious to get forward. There was a stern purpose in the countenance of the men that did not augur well for the long life of the first mutineer they met. But with all this, our night marching was somewhat trying. At times the bullocks would lie down, when no blows could induce them to get up. An old sergeant of my company taught me an infallible method for making them do it without any beating whatever. One man held the animal's tail straight out, whilst another clasped it between two walking sticks. You had only to push the sticks two or three times rather briskly up and down the tail, to make the most recalcitrant bullock walk off with his cart at a quick, lively pace and his tail straight up in the air. This rubbing up the joints of the vertebrae seemed to tickle and electrify them and make them happy for the moment: poor beasts they seemed to have but little enjoyment: let us hope this novel sensation may have relieved the monotony of their lives.

In one of the districts marched through, the road was patrolled at night by the men of a loyal Rajah. They wore no uniform and their arms were primitive; very inferior tulwars and old matchlocks of the preceding century. These fellows were being continually pounced upon as enemies by my men whose turn it was to form the advanced guard. Our lazy apothecary had upon these occasions to be pulled out of his cart, for like an idle Eastern he never went on foot as all the officers did in turn. After a few questions put to them by him we ascertained who they were and released them.

The Grand Trunk Road crosses the pretty range of the Raj-Mahall hills. They were thickly covered with dense forest, and I was assured that whilst the road was being made through them by gangs of convicts, we had lost at the rate of a man a day from tigers. It was a part of the road where I was told to keep a good look out in case of attack, not from tigers but from the Pandees, as our mutineers were then commonly called.[1] When passing through this jungly country one night, I was marching in rear of the column, to prevent straggling, when the alarm was given from the front. As I ran forward I found the men all bundling out of their bullock carts, handling their rifles, and fixing bayonets as they did so. I inquired what the matter was, but no one knew, except that the alarm had come from the front. I saw, however, as I hurried forward, that several teams of bullocks had bolted with their carts off the road. Upon reaching my six-pounder gun, I found everything in confusion. The native bullock drivers had run away, and the long team of gun bullocks

[1] This nickname came from a Sepoy named Mūngal Pandee, who was said to have been a chief instigator of this Bengal Mutiny.

had apparently tied themselves into a knot. It was a bright moonlight night. No shot had been fired and I could see no enemy. My half-awake apothecary was set to inquire from the bullock men of the gun-team what was the cause of the alarm. One of them explained that as they were quietly proceeding along the road a tiger had suddenly jumped in amongst the gun bullocks. It had evidently missed its spring, and had taken up a position under a tree not fifty yards from the road, where I saw it plainly in the clear Indian moonlight. The whole position was grotesque in the extreme. The Bengal bullock scents a tiger when in its neighbourhood, and then terror like a species of madness takes possession of it. Nothing can be done with it. Its driver, without the same keenness of nose, has a similar weakness of heart.

As the tiger stood looking at the strange spectacle, he presented a tempting shot, and I felt much inclined to try him with a rifle bullet. Some one near, evidently doubting the correctness of my aim, suggested we should fire a volley, and my pioneer, whom I had constituted master gunner during the march, pressed me to allow him to try the tiger with a round of canister from his six-pounder, and the men seemed anxious to make the experiment. In the twinkling of an eye, however, I remembered Lucknow's hard pressed garrison. If I wounded the tiger he might wound one of my company. The matter might be a serious affair, and would certainly delay us. Every British soldier was of great value then and every hour was of consequence. The amusement we expected from firing our gun at him would not justify me in doing it, so I discreetly contented myself with collecting our scattered bullocks, and having reformed our usual order of march

I resumed our advance. As we did so, I could see the silhouette of the tiger as it stood out distinctly in the clear Eastern moonlight with the forest as a dark background. He looked imposing, and I was glad to get so safely out of this unpleasant meeting with a lord of the Bengal jungles.

I shall not dwell upon any further incidents of our long and arduous march. We reached Benares on the 10th and Allahabad on the 13th of September, 1857.

Allahabad interested me very much owing to its important position on the Grand Trunk Road, which connected Bengal proper with our upper provinces. Its fort had been built just two centuries before, and though modernized, especially on the land front, much of the work of its native founders still remained. It stands in the fork formed by the junction of the Ganges and the Jumnah rivers, and our barracks stood within this strong, bastioned fort. Geographically it was, and still is, a place of great consequence, as it commands the navigation of both those rivers, and because the mountains of the Central Provinces to the south and south-west of it there narrow in the level country which constitutes the valleys of those two great rivers. It thus dominates the narrow strip of territory through which our railways and roads run north-west and south-east.

Allahabad was then held by a very weak garrison, whilst Benares, the holiest and most important of Hindoo cities, and then the hotbed of Hindoo fanaticism, had not a European battalion in or near it. The fact that no attempt was made by the ruling spirits in the Bengal Mutiny to seize Allahabad and to hold it and Benares in

strong force, proved clearly there was not amongst them any leader of real military ability.

The great Mahometan focus in this Mutiny was Delhi, and a small army had been early sent there from the Punjaub by Sir John Lawrence to retake it, and at the time I write of were besieging it. Allahabad, the most important position between Delhi and Calcutta, became therefore the first and most vital point on our long line of communications for us to make absolutely sure of. Had it fallen into the hands of the mutineers a regular siege would have been required to retake it. Allahabad in the enemy's hands, all communication between upper and lower India would have been extremely difficult. But apparently, and happily for us, the general tendency of the individual mutineer was to get to his home with whatever loot he was able to lay hands upon where his regiment had mutinied. Fortunately for us, no great man arose in the upper provinces to take the lead in this Mutiny. Had there been any very able man, amongst the royal family of Delhi for instance, who had had the sense to head a mutiny at the beginning of 1855, when every soldier we could spare from our ridiculously small army had been sent to the Crimea, our trouble and difficulty would have been increased a hundredfold.

A few British pensioners who had settled in India had been collected in the Allahabad Fort, and to it also all Englishmen in the neighbourhood who survived the Mutiny had flown.

I shall not risk wearying my reader by any attempt to describe our march in greater detail. One little episode I will mention, because it gave then, and I believe still gives, the British soldier's view upon the relative physical power

and fighting instinct of all native races and of the Englishman. On the march we had halted where there was a small detachment of very fine native soldiers from the Punjaub. In the cool of the evening one of them began exercising his muscles with very heavy clubs, which he handled gracefully and with the utmost ease. My men stood round admiringly, and I asked my pioneer, who was, I believe, the strongest man in the company, if he could handle them as well and as easily. His answer came at once. It was "No, sir, but I'll fight any three of those fellows." It is that belief in the superior pluck and fighting qualities of our race that won us India and still enables us to hold it. Had our men no such confidence in themselves we should never have relieved Lucknow nor retaken Delhi.

At Futteepore, a civil station some forty miles short of Cawnpore, we overtook the company of my battalion that had started one day before us. In a day or two the company that had left Chinsura the day after we had done so also arrived. All the companies of the *Transit* detachment were thus once more united under Major Barnston, to whom we were all devoted as the best soldier in the Battalion. Disheartening news, however, awaited us. It was an order from General Havelock at Cawnpore desiring us to remain at Futteepore for the present. This was indeed a knock-me-down blow to all ranks, for we had pushed forward with the utmost speed, working at times both night and day in order to rejoin our regimental Headquarters with General Havelock's column, before he made his final advance upon Lucknow to relieve that besieged garrison. I was sorry for myself, but was grieved still more for the men of my Company. I had held out to

them the hope of their being in time for that event if we hurried our advance in all possible ways, and they had nobly answered the call I made upon them.

We could have easily reached Cawnpore in a day, or a day and a half at most, or could have overtaken our head-quarters on the Oudh side of the Ganges before they had reached the Alum Bagh had we been allowed to do so. This order took all the life and go out of my Company for some days. However, we set about making a strong field-work at Futteepore as a "*point d'appui*" on our line of communications.

When the revolt began, Mr. Tucker was the Civil Commissioner at that place. He was a gifted and polished gentleman who thoroughly trusted the natives, and stoutly refused to believe they would ever harm him. They knew him well and had the greatest respect for him as one who was sincerely devoted to their interest. Being a very religious Christian, he had erected a large monolith upon the Grand Trunk Road where it passed through his station, on which the Lord's Prayer was engraved in three well-known native tongues and characters. When the news of the mutiny at Cawnpore reached his station, all the other Europeans retired to Allahabad, but he positively refused to budge, believing that no native would molest him. He was wrong in attributing to those for whom he had long worked strenuously virtues they did not possess. The mutineers attacked him in his house, to the flat top of which he retreated and there sold his life, making his cruel foes pay heavily for their treachery. The natives of the place assured us that he had killed thirteen of his murderers before he ceased to breathe. We were told to collect his remains and bury them. We found his skull

and collected such of his bones as we could find. We could obtain no coffin, but nailed them up in a box we found in his house, and buried them with all military honours. I mention this as proving that the mutineers did not even spare the white men who throughout their Indian careers had been the most devoted friends to all classes of the native population.

Whilst at Futteepore a trooper was tried and condemned to be hanged. I forget his crime, but he belonged to the 2nd Cavalry, the regiment that had murdered the prisoners and the women and children at Cawnpore. He was to be hanged by my company, and I thought I might have had some difficulty in finding a hangman. Only the year before when a man was condemned to be hanged for the murder of a comrade in a Crimean hospital, no man could be found amongst the fighting ranks in the Army who would act as executioner. Yet the reward offered was £20, and an immediate return home with a free discharge. How different, however, was their feeling when it was a question of hanging a sepoy of the regiment that had killed our women and children at Cawnpore! When I called my company to "attention," and asked if any man would hang him for me, apparently every man wanted to be the hangman! This as an example of how fierce our men had been made by that awful massacre. Had the brutal Nana, and, if possible, his still more brutal brother, Balla Rao, spared the lives of their prisoners and treated them well, in what a different tone would the history of the Mutiny have been written. When two years afterwards we chased a number of the red-coated mutineers over the trans Raptee range of hills into Napaul, one of our spies pointed out to me where Balla Rao had,

he said, died whilst crying out in his delirium, "The white men are coming, the white men are coming!"

As soon as General Havelock crossed into Oudh, on his march to relieve Lucknow, our three companies were ordered from Futteepore to Cawnpore. We had no tents, so upon reaching that city we were ordered to bivouac round that never-to-be-forgotten little building where so many of our countrywomen and their children were treacherously massacred by order of the Nana Sahib and his fiendish brother. The well, close to the house, into which their bodies had been thrown, had not been yet filled up, and the rooms of the house itself, besmeared with blood, were still littered with portions of women's underclothing and the shoes and socks and garments of little children. I picked up more than one handful of female hair that had evidently been torn from the heads of those helpless, half-starved victims by the butchers of the city who had been sent there expressly to murder them. A more sickening, a more maddening sight no Englishman has ever looked upon. Upon entering those blood-stained rooms, the heart seemed to stop. The horror of the scene was appalling and called up our worst angry passions. The coldest blooded foreigner would have been deeply affected by it, but it awoke in us, the countrymen of these helpless victims, a fiendish craving for the blood of the cowardly murderers who had ordered the massacre and of the brutes who had perpetrated it. As for our men, revenge was in their eyes. The indignity which had been put upon a proud people by a race whom we regarded as inferior in every sense was maddening. The idea that a native should have dared to put his hands upon an Englishwoman was too much for our insular pride. An all-absorbing craving for ruth-

less vengeance, that most unchristian of passions, was deep in all hearts. The walls had been scrawled over as if every man in General Havelock's force who could write had there recorded his vow to God that he would exact punishment in full measure for this crime, which blood alone could expiate. I read many of these scribbled invocations, and, though written in ungrammatical, badly spelt English, their meaning was unmistakable. But no man, no matter what his rank might be, left those precincts without clenched teeth and a longing in his heart for vengeance.

It is easy now at this distance of time, and in our quiet homes, to enlarge upon the "quality of mercy," and on Christ's holy teaching: but had any English bishop visited that scene of butchery when I saw it, I verily believe that he would have buckled on a sword. The blood is now cool. The grave has closed upon the instigators and perpetrators of that hellish crime, that awful tragedy, and justice has been appeased. But it was not so in those days: "Let me see Thy vengeance on them," was the cry heard wherever the English tongue was then spoken. We had still to reconquer India, and in doing so to deal with those fiends who had shamefully illtreated and murdered Englishwomen. As I look back to that time and think of its events, I am lost in amazement, mingled with a sort of national pride, at the smallness of the retribution we exacted, and how truthfully we can assert that mercy did season our justice.

CHAPTER XIX

Cawnpore in 1857—The Nana's Country Place—Advance into Oudh—Besieged in the Alum Bagh Palace

AT Cawnpore we found the headquarters of the 1st Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment, and the sick and wounded left behind by General Havelock when he had marched for Lucknow. The situation at Cawnpore then was by no means re-assuring. The officer in command, a brave old soldier who had served in the Peninsula under the Duke of Wellington, was in no way equal to the position his seniority as a colonel had conferred upon him. The last news from Delhi was not very promising; we knew that Sir James Outram was closely invested in Lucknow; the Gwalior contingent threatened our communications with Allahabad, and the Nana, with a considerable force of Foot and some horsed guns, was reported to be in the neighbourhood of Bithoor, that ruffian's principal country place.

Our brave old commander in Cawnpore resolved to attack this force at Bithoor. He may have been a good battalion commander in his day, but surely neither the science nor the art of war were amongst the subjects he was familiar with. He had, however, the good fortune to be subsequently killed in action: lucky man!

A small column was formed of all the available odds and ends of troops then in Cawnpore, Major Barnston's three companies of my battalion being amongst them. There

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was a field battery of Bengal Artillery, which we irreverently spoke of as our "cow-guns," because they were drawn by bullocks. They were cheap animals, and if killed in action could always be eaten. This sort of battery was then common in the Bengal Presidency.

We marched all night along a good pukha road and came into action early the following morning. Our detachment of white soldiers, consisting of men of the old historic Northumberland Fusiliers, under my most gallant Crimean friend, Captain, now General Bigge, and of Major Barnston's companies of the 90th Light Infantry, were kept too long in column on the hard metalled road. The consequence was, that the enemy's first round shot flew rattling through our ranks, killing and wounding some ten of our men. White soldiers in India were then worth more than the Koh-i-noor to us as an Empire, and this stupidly-caused loss annoyed us much. We felt it all the more because the usual length of time it took our "cow-guns" to come into action was upon this occasion prolonged from an amusing cause. We had some cowardly half-caste police immediately in front of the guns, who, upon the first round shot coming amongst us, fell flat on their stomachs and refused to move. Some rough usage from boots and sticks became necessary before they could be induced to remove their vile bodies to allow our guns to come into action. I must not omit an episode that caused this little skirmish to be remembered by most who took part in it. In an explosion at Cawnpore, some days previously, an Irish soldier, Timothy O'Brian, of the Northumberland Fusiliers, had been severely hurt. When he heard that his detachment was under orders to march and attack the rebels, he crept from the hospital and secreted himself in one of the dhoolies told off for the march. In

this manner he contrived to get to the front. When the first shot was fired, he was seen staggering to his place in his company, his legs still bound in bandages. When asked, "What the devil he was doing there?" his answer was, "As long as Tim O'Brian can put one leg before the other his comrades shall never go into action without him."[1]

I need not describe what followed. The operation was badly planned and still worse executed, as judged by the bumptious wisdom of my brother officers and myself. However, we drove the enemy back, and then bivouacked for the night outside the Nana's palace. I kept up a rattling good fire through the cold hours of the morning, using the great mahogany legs of that villain's billiard table as fuel. The following day we returned to Cawnpore. This was my first little action during the Mutiny, and it did not incline me to think highly of old Indian colonels of British regiments. Most certainly none of us learnt anything from it.

During the few days I passed at Cawnpore I made a survey of the barracks and of all the ground round them where poor General Wheeler had constructed the entrenchments which his gallant party so stoutly defended. Whilst so engaged, I was accosted by an officer who was one of the only two or three survivors of that prolonged siege and of the massacre which followed it. The description he gave me of the dreadful days of suspense our feeble garrison endured was intensely interesting.[2] I wrote much of it in

[1] This scene is well described by General Bigge in the *St. George's Gazette*, the Regimental Newspaper of "The Old and Bold."

[2] If any of my readers have not read "*Cawnpore*," by Sir George Trevelyan, Bart., I recommend them strongly to send for it at once. It is the most thrilling history I have ever read.

my diary at the time, but, as I shall mention later on, when the Gwalior contingent attacked Cawnpore during our subsequent absence at the relief of Lucknow, the enemy were allowed—through some one's fault—to loot the baggage that I and others left there when we crossed into Oudh. My small contribution to this baggage was a little box in which I had placed my diary. When subsequently Lord Clyde, returning from what was "the real and effective relief of Lucknow," drove off the Gwalior contingent from Cawnpore, and our cavalry got in amongst them, a Cross of the Legion of Honour was found upon a sepoy who was killed. This must, I think, have been the vagabond who looted my medals, for I believe I was the only one of those whose traps were stored there who owned that decoration. I wish I had caught that sepoy!

We now heard of General Havelock's proceedings up to the day he had left his bivouac at the Alum Bagh to fight his way through Lucknow to "The Residency," in what I may well call the centre of the city. By the route he took it was a hazardous operation with his guns and other impedimenta. But nothing could have stopped the men who then entered that city with him and Sir James Outram.

The news we received told us of four brother officers who had been killed near the Alum Bagh. One was Nichol Grahame, the bravest of the brave, who, amongst the first who entered the Great Redan on September 8, 1855, was, I believe, the last British soldier to leave it. No more daring man ever died for England.[1]

[1] He was the uncle of that distinguished officer, Lieut.-General Sir A. Hunter, K.C.B., now commanding the troops in Scotland. When the surgeon in reply to a question from young Grahame told him he must die, he lay back and said, "All right, I die like a soldier."

We were all impatience to get forward, and at last we received the order to do so. On October 21, 1857, our detachment of three companies, with some odds and ends of other regiments, about 500 men and four field guns, under the command of Major Barnston, crossed the Ganges by the Bridge of Boats there, bound for the Alum Bagh, a palace within a mile of Lucknow. We were all in the seventh heaven of delight at the prospect of at last getting into serious touch with the enemy. We were to take a convoy of 500 carts of provisions to the Alum Bagh and then to return to Cawnpore without delay. Hope told us we might be fortunate enough to escape the latter part of our instructions, for our one all-absorbing desire was to get at the enemy: we left the rest to the varying chances of war. I had picked up a good Madras servant on my way to Cawnpore, who was invaluable to me throughout the following eighteen months' campaigning in Oudh. He was as brave as any man in my company, and used to chaff any soldier he saw "bobbing" at a shot that went uncomfortably near. He had managed to find a coolie for me in Cawnpore, and I had bought a horse, for which I was fortunate enough to secure a syce—a native groom. The coolie carried some cooking pots on his head, together with a bundle consisting of my greatcoat, in which were rolled up the dressing-gown rescued from our wreck, a few flannel shirts, socks, pocket-handkerchiefs, and a spare pair of boots, etc. Except what I carried on my person those were all the worldly possessions with which I crossed into Oudh, where I was destined to campaign for the next year and a half. I carried a watch in my pocket and a telescope over my shoulder, to which was fastened a small compass. I had extremely little to lose, and my heart was as light as my

kit. I had nearly a hundred good men behind me, whom I trusted and who I believe trusted me. What more could any young captain of four and twenty wish for?

Our first two marches through Oudh were uneventful. The country was flat like a billiard table, and quite park-like in character. The road—very good and absolutely straight—passed through some deserted villages, and fine topes of mango and tamarind trees in its neighbourhood, each with a masonry-enclosed well, added much to the beauty of the surrounding landscape. Pious men who are successful in business often plant these groves and dig the attendant well for the benefit of travellers. They are usually the votary offerings of some Mohammedan in recognition of Allah having granted his prayer when he was in mental or bodily trouble, or of a pious Hindoo desirous of squaring matters in the spiritual world with some particular deity in his curiously extensive and unclean mythology.

To the wearied wayfarer along a dusty white Indian road during the heat of the day such resting places are indeed most grateful. Many a time when I thought my head would split from long exposure to the sun I have felt truly thankful to the man who had blessed the traveller with such a haven, where he not only found shelter from the sun and a drink of cool pure water, but where he could have a bucket of it poured over his burning head and the scorched nape of his neck. Oh, what a detestable country India is to campaign in during the hot weather!

The Sye River is an insignificant stream where the high-road to Lucknow crosses it at Bunnee bridge, some twelve miles from the Alum Bagh Palace. We were assured that the enemy intended to hold that position. It was my

company's turn to form the advanced guard that day, so all ranks looked forward to at least a satisfactory skirmish there. When I started before daybreak, a thick mist prevented us from seeing more than a hundred yards in any direction. Having reached the neighbourhood of the bridge I halted my company, and, drawing my revolver, went forward alone. I found the place deserted and the brick bridge destroyed.

Our three companies of the 90th Light Infantry took up their position in a nice little tope of mango trees beyond the river, and the rest of the day was spent in getting our convoy across the ford, which grew deeper the more it was used. But we made light of work now, for was not Lucknow close at hand ?

In the middle of the night I was awoke up by the cry of "Stand to your arms." We were quickly in the ranks in profound silence. But no enemy was to be seen or heard, and the outlying pickets were quiet all round us. No one could say who had given the alarm. But going round my company as it stood silently in its ranks, I stumbled over a man on the ground. I shook him, but he was evidently unconscious, and feeling his face over, I found he was bleeding from a wound in the head. The matter was mysterious. Questioning the men if they could explain it, his comrade said that whilst asleep he was awoke up by finding a man trying to strangle him. Only half awake, both assailed and assailant struggled to their feet, when the latter, clubbing his rifle, hit his supposed enemy over the head, and knocked him down : he then cried out, "Stand to your arms." The whole detachment had thus been disturbed in their bivouac through the indigestion and consequent dreams of this man, and I hope his broken head may have

cured him of a malady that had interfered seriously with the repose of his comrades.

Daybreak next morning, October 24, 1857, ushered in a fine Sunday, but it was to be no day of rest for any of us. To my great delight, "I Company" was detailed to form the rear guard, so we were bound to come in for any fighting there should be. I was ordered to remain where we had bivouacked until I had started every cart and camel on the road towards the Alum Bagh Palace, where General Havelock had left a garrison with all his sick, his elephants, and other impedimenta. We felt tolerably certain that the enemy, who had come out from Lucknow in some force to oppose us, would do their utmost to capture our long straggling convoy before we could get it into the Alum Bagh. Our idiotic enemy ought to have tried that during each day's march we made after leaving Cawnpore. Now, with a place of safety so near ahead of us, their chances of success were greatly lessened.

Oudh, between the Ganges and the Goomtee rivers, is a a dead level plain, well cultivated and supplied with villages and topes of mango and tamarind trees. The only made —or, in the vernacular, the only pukha—road of any importance was that between Cawnpore and Lucknow, on which we were then advancing. After a long wait and much bad language, I succeeded in getting my last gharry, or native cart, under way. But our progress was extremely slow, for those horrible creaking vehicles seemed to break down purposely to annoy us. The infernal gharrywans, or drivers, seemed to be quite indifferent, and to think it was our business to mend their carts when they broke down. I am afraid that the shoulders of many a gharrywan that day became disagreeably acquainted with our walking

sticks, for at first they would make no attempt either to mend their carts or to hurry forward. The enemy's cavalry followed us and several times came so close that I had to halt and treat them to a volley or two, firing by sections, so that they should never be able to charge home without a warm reception from at least half of my men. Some field guns opened upon us more than once, but the "cow battery" we had with us kept them fairly quiet, and its shells must have cost them some loss. The enemy had no shells, and when beyond the range of "canister" could only annoy us with round shot, which practically did no harm. I had no one but my own company near me for a long time, but even my ninety or a hundred men were too much for the cowardly rascals, of whom we killed many. I knew that I had a first rate soldier in the officer commanding the column, Major Roger Barnston, and that if he thought I was in any serious danger he would send me reinforcements. Our detachment had a few men wounded; Captain Guise was one of them. He had already lost his right arm, but, daring to a fault, he nevertheless would engage one of the enemy in single combat with a right handed sword, in which encounter he nearly lost his left hand also.

The name "Alum Bagh" means "the Garden of the World," and had been given to a palace built by some royal Begum beyond the southern suburbs of Lucknow. It was a large three-storied and very substantially built square brick building, with a tower at each corner, in which there was a staircase. Round it was a large square garden, whose sides were about four hundred yards each, the whole enclosed by a thick wall some twelve or more feet in height. There was a large two storied gateway opening out upon the road, beyond which was a very pretty little mosque with minarets.

At each angle of the garden was a tower, round the outside of which we had constructed a bastion with a feeble attempt at an abattis beyond the ditch. General Havelock had left all his tents and other impedimenta, including sixty-four wounded and the same number of sick, together with some twenty elephants, at this place, under a guard of 280 men. The officer in command was an old major of the Gordon Highlanders, upon whom the responsibility of his position apparently weighed heavily. I know he was a brave man at heart, but it struck us young captains that he was much too cautious. A great sportsman and a remarkable shot, though no tiger had any terror for him, responsibility made him over anxious and decidedly querulous.

Our horses soon began to suffer from want of food, so one day several of us went outside the gates some few hundred yards to protect our grass cutters whilst they scraped together a little herbage for our poor starving animals. The enemy, seeing this, sent forward some skirmishers, and we had an exciting little interchange of rifle bullets with them. I suppose we were getting the best of it, for at last bang came a 32-pounder shot among us. This attracted our old Commandant's attention, and, looking out from the top of the palace, he espied us, the delinquents who had thus brought down a fire upon the post in his charge. He was furious, sent for our commanding officer, Major Barnston, and ordered him to go out and place us all in arrest, my old and valued friend, Captain Bigge, of the Northumberland Fusiliers, being one of the number. We returned to our tents wrathful at this old gentleman's "unheard-of presumption," as we deemed his action to be in the matter. That night, or the next morning, Barnston went to him to ask upon what charge we were to be tried,

as the officers of our regiment were not accustomed to be placed under arrest. The old gentleman fumed, and at last ordered us to be released with a wigging. This conduct on his part did not tend to harmony in the garrison, for after all, if any real or serious danger presented itself, it would mainly be upon us young gentlemen lately from the Crimea he would have to depend. Very improperly we all thenceforth disliked him and thought little of him as a soldier.

Our life when shut up with him in the Alum Bagh was extremely monotonous. From a battery at the "Yellow House," about 1,500 yards off, and situated near the suburbs of the city, we were daily saluted by some 32-pounder shot thrown in amongst our tents. Sometimes they struck the palace itself, and occasionally a horse or a gun-bullock was killed, but it is astonishing how little damage any such ill-directed and random fire ever does. It would have been very easy any morning at daybreak to take this battery which thus constantly annoyed us and occasionally caused us loss. But our old Highland Commandant would not sanction any such enterprise. His garrison was small, his sick and wounded in hospital were numerous, and he over-estimated the dangers of his position; at least we young soldiers thought so. He was urged by my commanding officer, Major Barnston—who understood war thoroughly—to let us take this battery at early dawn and spike its guns. We were then well into the cold weather, and just before daybreak at that season the sepoy is at his worst. Almost paralysed with cold, he is nearly torpid and good for very little. All ranks in those three companies of my regiment were young, and, as they had but lately served in the batteries before Sebastopol, they thought

little either of the feeble fire from this battery or of the sepoys who worked it. If permitted to attack it they would have made short work of both the battery and its garrison. But the commandant had been in India almost all his service; he had seen next to nothing of war, and knew little of its ways; besides, the sun had apparently taken all "the go" out of him. He would not hazard the risk of failure, so we had to sulk and quietly submit to the insolence of these rebels, who must have thought us a poor lot in consequence. Perhaps I am prejudiced even still against this old major and do his memory injustice. But I write what all of us young captains and subalterns thought at the time. The fact that we had served in the Crimea had doubtless made us bumptious, but we were all bored at being thus cooped up in a way which the circumstances of the moment—as far as we understood them—did not warrant. I think this inflated notion of our superiority over those who had not had the advantage of serving against the Russians was a notable feeling with us generally throughout the Mutiny, and caused many of us to over-estimate our importance and to undervalue our Indianized comrades.

We had very little to interest us, or even to occupy our minds, whilst we were besieged in the Alum Bagh. There were no books to while away the tedious, oh! the very long hours of our imprisonment. We daily mounted the roof of the Palace to gaze round through our telescopes and examine the enemy's position between us and the city. But our eyes were still more longingly bent in the Cawnpore direction. "Sister Anne, Sister Anne, do you see any one coming?" was the common question we asked our friends who possessed the best binoculars. When the enemy treated us to

a few round shot, they gave us unwittingly something interesting, often amusing, to talk about. But we were a dull lot. I have often thought since of what a boon to our garrison in every way a Baden-Powell would have been! Under his auspices we should have had theatricals, and if our united store of books could not have supplied us with a play, why, he would have written one for us and taken himself the leading part in it, either as an old man or as a beautiful young girl. It is men of his bright imagination, resources and diversified talents, a first-rate soldier whom all ranks feel to be a real comrade, who springs to the front during a siege, or when any body of men are in difficulties. In all trying positions such a man is indeed worth much.

Not far from my tent were drawn up in a long row the elephants General Havelock had left behind him when he started thence in the hope of being able to bring back with him the women and children besieged in the Lucknow Residency. These poor animals grew thinner every day. They were on a short allowance of flour, and but very little green food ever came in their way. Their backbones became more prominent as weeks flew by, and at last their bodies assumed very much the shape of an upturned deep-keeled sailing boat in a somewhat dilapidated condition. All of us who were fond of animals felt much for these patient and invaluable slaves. I watched them many an hour, and their intelligent ways and habits interested me greatly. By day their bodies are never entirely at rest. Although their skin is very thick the smallest fly irritates it, and consequently their huge broad ears never cease to flap nor their tails to swing to keep these torments from them. To still further protect them their trunks are employed in taking up pints of dust which they blow over their much wrinkled skins,

whose very thickness makes the lines formed by these wrinkles soft and a prey to every species of fly. Indeed, these lines on their skin form a pattern that always reminded me of the marks on old crackled china.

Kossids, that is native messengers carrying news, usually written in Greek characters on small slips of thin paper tightly rolled in a quill, were occasionally able to get through the enemy's lines. But the risk was great, and more than most natives were ready to incur. Outram was very anxious to afford the Commander-in-Chief the benefit of his local knowledge in preparing his schemes for the relief of Lucknow. But it was impossible to send a document describing any such plan by a kossid. This coming to the knowledge of Mr. Kavanagh, a European clerk in one of our public offices in Lucknow, he at once proposed to try and reach our camp disguised as a native. From long residence in the country he spoke Hindostanee extremely well, and, it might be said, like a native. He asked to be allowed to take with him a trustworthy native—in fact an experienced kossid—whom he knew well and upon whose coolness and discretion he could rely. This native would do most of the talking that might be necessary. Mr. Kavanagh's offer was gladly accepted, and to him Sir James Outram described the plan he considered best for Sir Colin Campbell to follow in his intended advance upon the Lucknow Residency. Mr. Kavanagh knew the city and its vicinity thoroughly. He would be able to afford Sir Colin a vast amount of topographical information that was likely to be of inestimable value to him and to the relieving army.

Mr. Kavanagh and his native companion crossed the Goomtee River during the night of November 9, 1857, without much apparent difficulty, and, thanks chiefly to

the coolness and quick address of his companion and guide, he reached Sir Colin Campbell's camp the next morning. For this splendid and daring service the Queen awarded him the Victoria Cross, and no man ever deserved it more. The daring native was also liberally rewarded. As I shall mention further on, I made Mr. Kavanagh's acquaintance when my company and I were in rather a "tight place" during our endeavour to join hands with the Lucknow besieged garrison.

CHAPTER XX

Sir Colin Campbell's Relief of Lucknow

WHEN it became generally known that the Bengal native army had mutinied, the eyes of all men, British and native, were turned to Delhi. Men asked one another, "What would the native Royal Family do?" It had never been forgotten by the people that the man to whom we accorded the empty title of king was the legal representative of the old Mohammedan conquerors and rulers of India whom we had dispossessed. The hostile feeling of these Princes towards us was proverbial, but the Indian world knew there was not a really able man amongst them. When all the English officials and other Europeans in Delhi fled for their lives, its royal palace at once became the headquarters of this formidable rebellion. We had long permitted this Moslem royal family to reside there surrounded with every luxury, but we had never allowed any of its members the smallest share in the government of the country. The native princes, thus bereft of all power, were naturally discontented with their lot, and when the Mutiny broke out it was equally natural they should side with the sepoys who were prepared to recognize the Great Mogul as their lawful sovereign. It may be assumed, I think, that these princes were fully aware from the first of the formidable and secret combination against us. All available British troops were at once collected in hot haste from north, south, east and

west to besiege Delhi, and upon the result depended for a long time the question as to whether we should be able to hold our own beyond the space enclosed within the old Mahratta Ditch at Calcutta pending the arrival of reinforcements from home.

This Siege of Delhi was the most memorable event in the history of the great Mutiny, and never did the pluck and endurance of the British and of our Punjaub soldiers of all ranks, from the general to the private, shine forth more brilliantly. How I wished at the time to be there. Its assault and capture marked the turning point in the Mutiny, and we all breathed more freely when it fell. It was a splendid military achievement, and our subsequent proceedings in Oudh and elsewhere, though most creditable to all concerned, were not in importance to be compared to it. When I subsequently learned the details of its events from Sir Grant Hope and his aide-de-camp, Augustus Anson, I realized how much I had missed. The story of that siege and of the operations in its neighbourhood told to me by them sounded to my ears like an epic. It is not to be surpassed either in the mighty consequences that hung upon its issue, in the brilliancy of its daily incidents, nor in examples of heroic daring on the part of the besiegers, by any siege I know of in ancient or modern history.

When the news of its fall first reached us in Oudh we felt that the backbone of the Mutiny had been broken. The eyes of all Hindostan had from the first been turned towards Delhi, and upon the line that would be taken by its Princes. They certainly threw their lot in with our mutinous sepoys, and they were now in our hands as prisoners. Delhi retaken became once more an appanage of our Indian Empire.

The news received went on to say that most of our Delhi army were already on the march southwards to help us, and were expected to cross at Cawnpore into Oudh about the 28th instant (October). Sir Colin Campbell was to come with it, and upon his arrival at the Alum Bagh would take forward our three company detachment with him.

As some misapprehension has arisen from the manner in which the expressions, "The Siege of Lucknow" and "The Relief of Lucknow," are often used, I will here make a few remarks upon the subject that may be of use to my reader.

It is not generally remembered that we had two "sieges" and two so-called "reliefs" of that place about the end of 1857 and the beginning of 1858. In the first siege, the garrison consisted of a mere handful of British soldiers. They occupied the unfortified Residency, which was crowded with English women and children who had taken refuge there from many parts of Oudh. The besiegers were a vast horde of mutineers and of armed men from the city and neighbouring districts. That truly great man, General Sir Henry Lawrence, who was "Chief Commissioner" to the Court of Oudh, assumed military command of the place as soon as it was hemmed in by the enemy. But within a few days of its being invested he was most unfortunately killed in his room overlooking the Goomtee River by a shell from the enemy. The command of the garrison then devolved upon Colonel Inglis, 32nd Regiment, who, though by no means an able man in any respect, possessed the pluck and decision to abide by Sir Henry Lawrence's injunction to hold out as long as possible, and never to make any terms with the treacherous enemy around him.

General Sir James Outram, having been appointed Chief

Commissioner of Oudh, *vice* General Sir Henry Lawrence, reached Cawnpore September 16, 1857. There he found General Havelock with the gallant troops that General had so often led to victory. As a general officer, Outram was Havelock's senior in rank, and according to Army regulations the military command devolved upon the senior. But, with his habitual chivalry in all matters, great and small, and a magnanimity all his own, he waived his military right in General Havelock's favour. How very very few would have acted thus! His divisional order of September 16, 1857, spoke the man. In it he said he felt it was due to General Havelock and to the noble exertions he had made to relieve Lucknow, "that to him should accrue the honour of the achievement," that "in gratitude for, and in admiration of, the brilliant deeds in arms achieved by General Havelock and his gallant troops, he will cheerfully waive his rank on the occasion, and will accompany the force to Lucknow in his civil capacity as Chief Commissioner of Oudh, tendering his military services to General Havelock as a volunteer. On the relief of Lucknow, the Major-General will resume his position at the head of the forces." This noble unselfishness ratified the title unofficially, but unanimously, accorded to him, of "Bayard of India."

The small garrison under Colonel Inglis was sorely pressed and in great straits when Havelock forced his way into the besieged Residency. This operation, which was effected after much hard fighting and considerable loss in killed and wounded, constituted the first "Relief of Lucknow." But in reality this so-called "relief" was little more than a succour thrown into that besieged place.

Upon reaching the Lucknow Residency, Outram found his force was much too small to warrant him in any attempt

to carry off the large number of women, children, and wounded men of the garrison, and his own wounded also. He had therefore to content himself with awaiting the arrival of an army strong enough to do so, though his presence and the troops he brought with him saved the old garrison and had given new life and vigour to every white person in the place.

The space covered by the Residency was much too small for the now augmented garrison, so he at once extended it considerably, taking in the buildings and palaces known as the Taree Khotee, the Fureed Buksh, and the Chattah Munzil, all situated on the river Goomtee, below the Residency.

As described in the next chapter, Lucknow was eventually relieved by Sir Colin Campbell in November, 1857, an operation that is commonly referred to as the "Second and final Relief of Lucknow." Having carried off the garrison, with its women, children, sick and wounded, and leaving a division under Sir James Outram outside and to the south of the city, near the Alum Bagh, Sir Colin Campbell hurried back with all speed to save Cawnpore, then hardly pressed by a very large hostile force and unskilfully defended by its small British garrison.

When, therefore, the "second and final relief" of Lucknow was effected by Sir Colin Campbell, he found the garrison was under the command of Outram, not of Havelock. The latter was disliked by our men, whilst Outram was their hero. Havelock was one of the Covenanter School, a hard man, as hard upon himself as he was upon others. In the days when Christ's followers had to struggle for existence with the pagan rulers they worked amongst, Havelock would have willingly died a martyr's death in his Master's cause.

He was not of the nineteenth century; his noble spirit belonged to the age when men died gladly for the faith they believed in. But, judging him as a leader of soldiers and from a soldier's point of view, he was, according to my estimate of the two men, Outram's inferior, except from a purely religious aspect.

The second siege of Lucknow was that carried out by Sir Colin Campbell in March, 1858. In it, as well as in his relief of that garrison, I took an active but a humble part as captain commanding my company in the 90th Light Infantry. I shall now endeavour to tell my reader what I saw and was cognizant of upon those two occasions.

I do not know of any instance in military history where a general was called upon to face a more difficult, a more dangerous problem than that which Sir Colin Campbell had before him in the relief of Lucknow's beleaguered garrison. The population of Lucknow was estimated to be 250,000, to which must be added a crowd of mutineers from the Bengal army, which had largely consisted of Oudh men. His task was rendered all the more critical and delicate by the number of women and children who had to be brought away from the heart of a closely invested city. The soldiers of all ranks whom he had available for this attempt did not exceed 4,500, whilst the enemy in and around Lucknow must certainly have been twelve times as numerous.

The nearest British garrison was at Cawnpore, fifty-three miles away, and for the defence of that unfortified city, only 1,000 bayonets could be spared, half of whom were sepoys of no great fighting value. The Gwalior contingent was known to be already on the march to attack it, and although reinforcements from England were almost

daily being dribbled into it, the place could not resist any prolonged and serious attack.

According to my views, the plan adopted by General Havelock for the relief of the Lucknow garrison had been faulty, but the plucky pertinacity with which that veteran —enfeebled by age, illness, and a very long service in India —fought his way through the streets of Lucknow into the Residency, appealed to all classes of the English people. John Bull never fails to admire chivalrous daring, and is proud of the general who persists in heroic efforts to succour threatened comrades, and who succeeds in doing so.

Sir Colin Campbell was not a man, however, to repeat the blunder made by General Havelock, whose force had suffered heavily from being taken through some of the narrow streets of the city. He had the advantage also of Sir James Outram's opinion—based upon full local knowledge—as to the route by which the Residency could be most easily reached with the smallest loss, and he entirely agreed with that general's views. The plan of the city, brought through the enemy's lines by the plucky Mr. Kavanagh, on which Outram had marked the route he advised Sir Colin to take, was of great value to him. That line he meant to follow, and practically it would enable him to reach the neighbourhood of the Sekunder Bagh without encountering any seriously fortified position held by the enemy.

On November 4 clouds of dust along the Cawnpore road told us in the Alum Bagh that troops were approaching, and an advanced party of cavalry was soon at our gate. It was not, however, Sir Colin's main army. It was merely the advanced guard of the cavalry division under Brigadier-General Little, who had come on ahead from Sir Hope

Grant's camp at Buntera, about six miles distant, to obtain and take back for the Commander-in-Chief the plan of Lucknow that Sir James Outram had sent to the Alum Bagh. We were given to understand at the time that Major McIntyre refused to give up Sir James Outram's despatch, saying that his orders were to deliver it himself to Sir Colin and to no one else. The cavalry column had accordingly its march to no purpose. I believe this was the case, for when Sir Colin subsequently reached the Alum Bagh, I was on the roof of the palace and witnessed the meeting between him and Major McIntyre. I was near enough to see Sir Colin dance a sort of war dance round the unfortunate major, often shaking his fist at him in dire anger as he did so, whilst the delinquent stood with hands behind him, and with his eyes on the ground like a naughty schoolboy. Although the punishment of one who had so inconsiderately hurt my *amour propre* in needlessly putting me under arrest ought to have rejoiced my heart, I sincerely felt for the gallant old officer whom a misconception of duty led to adopt so unusual a course.

Brigadier-General Little and his cavalry were accordingly soon on their way back to Buntera, which Sir Colin reached some days afterwards. The relieving army, with Sir Colin at its head, reached our camp in the Alum Bagh November 12.

Early in the forenoon of November 14, 1857, the three companies of the 90th Light Infantry, of which I commanded one, moved from the Alum Bagh, and joined the Brigade of that distinguished leader, Colonel Adrian Hope. It consisted of the 1st Battalion Shropshire Light Infantry, the 2nd Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and the scratch battalion under Major Barnston, made up

by the addition to our three companies of some companies of the 84th Regiment and of the Madras Fusiliers to a total of about 600 bayonets. We had no tents, and a bivouac towards the middle of November in Oudh, where wood for great fires is difficult to obtain, is not the way in which "Micky Free" would have selected to pass a night.

Sir Colin's relieving army consisted of about 700 sabres, 3,800 bayonets, and some 24 guns, of which a few were heavy pieces. Having deposited his camp equipment and all unnecessary impedimenta within the Alum Bagh enclosure, he started November 14, 1857, on his difficult and most important mission. We had with us fourteen days' provisions for ourselves and for all those whom we hoped to relieve in Lucknow. Instead of pushing straight forwards by the road General Havelock had injudiciously followed as far as the Char-Bagh bridge, we moved off at once to our right, and entirely clear of the city, passing by the old ruined fort of Jellahabad, and keeping well in the open, where we should always have the advantage of the enemy. We circled, as it were, round the southern and eastern outskirts of Lucknow at a distance of about a mile and a half from the then unfordable canal which there formed the city boundary, until we struck the river Goomtee as it flows below the high ground upon which stands, in imposing grandeur, the palace known as the Dil Khoosha—in English, "The Heart's Delight." It is about three and a half miles south-east of the Residency, and was the shooting residence of the Kings of Oudh. A high wall of sun-dried brick surrounded it, through which openings were easily made. As we entered it, several small deer of various sorts ran about, terrified at this unusual invasion; most of them were in the soldiers' camp kettles that evening. We were thrown forward

into a line of skirmishers, and as we advanced an elephant came charging backwards through my company with the lower half of his trunk hanging by a strip of skin to the other half above it. This had been done by a round shot, and the poor beast was trumpeting loudly from pain as he passed me. I knew the elephant well for a couple of years afterwards: it got on satisfactorily, its mahout feeding it by hand, and taking it daily into deep water to drink.

Below us, and about three-quarters of a mile north of the Dil Khoosha, stood a very large, ugly, and un-Indian looking edifice known as the Martiniere College, between which and the city were fine mango gardens. From both it and the Dil Khoosha the enemy retired upon our approach, treating us to a few round shot as they did so. Having reached this college, we turned sharp to the left—in a north-westerly direction—along the road that led from it straight into the city, and took up a position in a fine garden of trees covered by Haidar's Canal, which there forming the south-eastern boundary of the city, empties itself about a mile lower down its course into the Goomtee River. Our long straggling column of commissariat animals was so far behind that Sir Colin determined to push on no further that day. Fires were soon lit, and the smell of cooking had begun to gladden the noses of our hungry men when the enemy showed signs of attacking. They opened upon us with some guns, and plied us with musketry pretty freely. We fell in and advanced towards Banks' House, which stood as a prominent feature beyond the canal just referred to. Captain Peel's guns had come into action within a few hundred yards of it, and as we came up and were about to pass to the front through them, he held up his hand and

said, with the cool affability which always distinguished him, "One more broadside, if you please, gentlemen." The expression smelt of the sea, and amused us much. What a splendid fellow he was! We halted, he poured in his "broadside," and we then doubled down to the canal, but found it unfordable. However, the enemy showed no more signs of annoying us, and my company having been left there on picket and as a protection for Peel's guns, the rest of Barnston's scratch battalion retired to their bivouac in the Martiniere grounds. The enemy threw several small shells amongst us during the evening from a mortar near the canal bank. I don't think any of them burst, or if they did, we at any rate received no injury from them. I only refer to them because upon no other occasion had I ever seen brass shells made use of. They had evidently been recently cast in the Lucknow bazaars. The night was cold, dark, and very still, so that as I went round my sentries along the canal I could plainly hear the enemy talking on the opposite bank. We remained on picket in a hollow out of sight all the next day, November 15. The enemy fired heavily upon any one who showed himself, but I don't think they harmed a man of my company. The sun was very hot all through that day, and we felt it much, having neither tree nor wall to shelter us. We were glad to be relieved that evening, as we had been up and about all the previous night. We all slept soundly, though our bivouac was cold; I know I did.

Next day, November 16, we did not move off until nearly noon. Sir Colin Campbell had paid us a visit some time before, and telling Major Barnston that he wished to see the officers of his "scratch battalion," he made us a little address. He impressed upon us the necessity of using the

bayonet as much as possible when we got into the city, and not halting to fire when we could avoid doing so.

Upon "falling in" we moved to our right, my company leading. Passing round a native village, and then turning towards the city, we marched between the village and the Goomtee River to the canal, upon the bank of which we had been on picket about a mile higher up the previous night. We crossed this canal close to where it joined the Goomtee and below where the enemy had dammed it, and so got over it with dry feet. Cutting off a wide bend of the river, we made for the northern end of a village—about a mile from where we had crossed the canal—which I afterwards knew as Sultangunj, into the long and narrow main street of which we turned in a southerly direction. It was deserted, and for some time we were unopposed. I think we had two or three men of what was then the best of cavalry regiments—the 9th Lancers—in front of us. Behind them came my company, and then some twenty or thirty more of that regiment. A couple of 18-pounders were not far off, for Sir Colin was evidently aware that the enemy strongly held the Sekunder Bagh (the garden of Alexander the Great) and the Shah Nujif mosque beyond it, and that heavy guns would be required to breach the thick, twenty-feet high brick walls surrounding both those places. The Sekunder Bagh was a garden about a hundred yards square, with a substantial turret at each angle and a high two or three storied gateway in the middle of its southern face.

Behind the guns came either the remainder of Barnston's battalion or the 93rd Highlanders; both were close together. In passing through the deserted village, which the enemy made no attempt to defend, we suffered nothing for some time, though a continued flight of bullets was passing over

us. My Madras servant kept close behind me. He was a very plucky fellow, much given to looting and quite indifferent to danger. His brother was a native officer in a Madras Sepoy Regiment. All along the village street, at every short check, and there were many of them, he kicked in the door of the house nearest to him, and I believe collected (!) a good amount of rupees, for he knew where to look for them in the roofs and floors. At last I saw the few lancers who were in front of me huddling close together in a corner of the street. The fire was becoming too hot for mounted men ; indeed, I thought at the time it was unwise to have placed them in so false a position. We now pushed forward beyond them, and had to cross a tolerably wide street running at right angles to the line of our advance. Down it the enemy poured a heavy musketry fire. I called out to my men to run across it, and did so myself, with a splendid young sergeant close behind. He is now Major Newland, on the retired list. No pluckier man ever followed his officer, and no man ever deserved his promotion better.

The colour-sergeant of my company was a fine-looking fellow, but destitute of all nerve or pluck. I never could find him when the bullets were in full chorus, so I displaced him immediately after we had relieved Lucknow. Of course, he had come to us "from another regiment": that is a true article of regimental belief in all corps as regards objectionable officers or useless sergeants or privates.

As I ran over this open street where it joined that we were advancing along, I went as fast as I could, with Sergeant Newland close behind me. I turned to see how my men were coming on when I reached the far side, and found Sergeant Newland with his hand on his mouth,

from which he was bleeding freely. When he removed his hand, I saw that a bullet had cut away and mangled his upper lip horribly. Of course he was thus lost to me for the rest of the operations, and a great loss he was. Where the village ends, the road ran into a sort of deep cutting in which one was well sheltered; but the highly walled-in Sekunder Bagh was on our right, and from it a heavy fire was poured upon any one who showed over the sloping side of the road. In a short time way was made along the road behind us for a heavy gun. When it reached me, the question was how to get it out of this deep, hollow road to the level of the ground on which stood the walls of the Sekunder Bagh. It could only be done by hand, so we all buckled to, and with hand ropes, and by dint of spoking at the wheels, we at last got it where it came into action. But it cost us much in men's lives to do so. The enemy's bullets peppered us sorely, and seemed to hammer the iron tyre of the wheel I was working at. It is astonishing how any one lived through the heavy fire poured in upon us at such very close range during this trying operation. However, my men lying down along the bank with their heads only exposed when they had loaded and were ready to fire, did much to keep down the enemy's fire, for I don't think we were over eighty yards from the corner tower of the place when we hauled the gun into action. The gun opened fire at once, sending great clouds of dust into the air when at each round its heavy shot struck the wall. Close behind me were the 93rd Highlanders, and as soon as the gun had made a sufficiently big hole in the wall, they went gallantly for it, whilst Wylde, with his magnificent regiment of Sikhs, went for the only gateway into the place and quickly burst it open.

There was a very narrow staircase on each side of the

arched gateway leading to an upper story, well packed with the enemy. Without a moment's hesitation the Sikhs mounted these winding corkscrew-like stairs, and in a few minutes were amidst the enemy, cutting them up with their tulwars and hurling others out of the open windows. Few British soldiers would have done this, and yet their loss was small. They knew their enemy's habits and mode of thought better than we did. However, no matter what they knew, it was a splendid illustration of the pluck and daring of the Punjaub soldiers. Major Wylde, certainly one of the bravest of men, was himself either killed or badly wounded in this affair.

Blount's troop of Bengal Horse Artillery now came up the lane of the village by which we had marched, and having struggled up its steep bank to the level of the ground surrounding the Sekunder Bagh, it galloped past that building, unlimbered, and came into action against the Shah Najif. I never saw anything prettier or more gallantly done in action.

As we looked from the Sekunder Bagh towards the Residency, this Shah Najif mosque, with its massive white dome, was to our right front, and not more than about six or seven hundred yards from us, whilst immediately in our front were the ruins of some mud-built sepoy lines. Our brigadier, Adrian Hope, now told me to advance my company at the double and occupy these ruined huts, as the enemy's skirmishers had already begun to annoy the men of Blount's battery from them. At that time my men were lying along the main road that led from the Sekunder Bagh to the barracks, and were thus covering the left of Blount's battery, then engaged with the sepoys in front. I did as I was told, and we advanced at a quick pace—

much faster than our regulation double. I was glad when doing so to hold on by Adrian Hope's stirrup leather, as he trotted forward. A gallant, daring soul and a most rising soldier, he was killed soon afterwards in trying to accomplish what was impossible, but what the arrogant presumption of an ignorant, over-bearing superior—styled a general—had ordered him to undertake. I soon had my men under cover amidst the walls and ruins of the old native lines. But I found that I required cover from the rear quite as much as from the front, as a large proportion of Blount's shells, fired from our right rear, burst at the muzzle through the badness of their fuses,[1] and sent their splinters and their bullets amongst us. Alas, I then lost a great friend, Major Barnston, from this cause. He was one of the very best soldiers I ever knew in the Army.

Sir Colin Campbell had ordered him to take his scratch battalion forward—minus my company sent on another mission, as I have just described—and strive to get into the Shah Najif mosque, which I have already said stood on the right of the road into the city. His orders were, "If you cannot force your way in, get your men under cover near it, and come back and tell me what you have done and seen."

He did as he was ordered, but every available point of ingress that he could get at was built up. He tried in vain to force an entrance, but could not do so. Having therefore placed his men in the best shelter he could find, he galloped back and told Sir Colin what he had done. Sir Colin said, "Very well, keep your men there for the present and I will reinforce you." Barnston turned his horse and started to

[1] Fuse composition deteriorates quickly in India, or at least it did so at the time to which I refer.

gallop back to his men, when another of those thrice accursed shells from Blount's battery burst at the muzzle, and a great piece of it struck my comrade in the thigh.

The Shah Najif fell into our possession towards evening, after it had been for a considerable time subjected to such a bombardment from Captain Peel's naval guns, and from other heavy pieces worked by the Royal Artillery, that the native garrison could no longer remain in it.

When the day's work was over, we were ordered to retire and bivouac under the high walls of the Sekunder Bagh. As soon as I had piled arms, I went inside to try and find my comrade Barnston, as I was told the wounded had been sent there. This was a mistake, but I was glad I went in, for I never before had seen the dead piled up, one above the other in tiers, in order to clear a passage through a mass of slain. Such was the case in the archway leading into that awful charnel-house where lay the bodies of some 2,000 unfaithful sepoys. As soon as I entered the garden I was fired at by some of the enemy in one of the corner towers of the building, and having ascertained that none of our wounded were in the place I returned to my bivouac with a saddened heart at having failed to find my chum, Major Barnston. Later on I found him. He was quite cheery but said he was cold, so I gave him my overcoat. We parted, and my heart was sore indeed, for I knew from personal experience how dangerous big wounds in India always are. I never saw him again. He was taken to Cawnpore, and during the morning of the day he died, as I was afterwards told, he received a letter from me, which was read to him, at which he was much pleased, and he was greatly interested with the military news it contained. The remembrance of that fact has always been a satisfaction to me. In common with all his comrades, I deeply felt his

death, and we all realized that England had lost in him a soldier of very great promise indeed: a man who possessed all the qualities and qualifications required by a leader in war.

I had a cold bivouac that night in a thin silk jacket without a greatcoat. When I sat up the next morning, I smelt something burning, and upon looking at the high wall of the Sekunder Bagh immediately above me, I saw the dead body of a sepoy lying across it, and partly hanging over its edge. He was dressed in a cotton-padded sort of greatcoat, which had caught fire and was slowly burning: the smell of his frizzling flesh was not very refreshing in that early morning hour. At the same time some Sikh soldiers made their appearance upon the same part of the wall. They called to some three or four of the enemy who had spent the night in a corner tower, ordering them to come out. The evening before, long after the fighting there was over, these men had kept up a fire upon all who entered the garden and had wounded several of our men. They came out, looking meek, for I presume they had had no food or water for many hours. The Sikhs made them kneel down, and having asked them many questions that I could not catch killed them with their tulwars. Months afterwards whilst relating the fate of these men to Augustus Anson, then A.D.C. to Sir Hope Grant, he said that not long after the fighting had ceased for the day he was sent with a message. Believing that the person for whom it was intended might be found in the Sekunder Bagh, he rode into it through the big gate. There was a little desultory firing still going on between some Highlanders and the sepoys in the towers. His attention was attracted to a Highlander who at that moment was stalking some one amongst the orange trees inside the place. He saw him go

down on his knees, take steady aim, fire, and then heard some one fall from the tree aimed at. To his horror, and to that of the Highlander's also, they found it was an old woman who, Anson afterwards discovered, had been put up there a short time before by a humane officer who wished to get her out of danger. The poor Highlander was very much put out, but said he had been already fired upon several times by some one in that direction, and thought the bullets had come from a man in that tree.

Before my company advanced the next morning—Tuesday, November 17—two very long and deep trenches were dug on the side of the road that led into Lucknow, and in them the enemy's dead were placed crossways. Some one kept a tally of the total number buried in them, and I was told at the time that it was the number of the year, 1857. I don't suppose that in modern times any such great number of men killed in action on a very small space of ground, had ever been thus buried in two heaps. The two pits were nearly filled with the dead, and the excavated earth was heaped over them.

Our pouches and artillery limbers had to be replenished, and we all wanted food, for we had had very little to eat during the previous day. This, and I presume other circumstances that I know not of, made us late in renewing our advance. We began by pressing back the enemy on our left so as to secure that flank of the columns on our right with which it was intended to attack seriously. The great point to be attacked that day was what had been the officers' Mess House of our 32nd Regiment—now the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry—which had long formed the most important part of the Lucknow garrison before the Mutiny. We knew it was surrounded by a masonry-reveted ditch having two

drawbridges over it, one towards us, the other towards the city. It stood on high ground in the middle of a large garden enclosed with kutcha, i.e. unbaked brick walls in a dilapidated condition, and both it and the garden were held in force by the enemy.

When Sir Colin had pounded it for a considerable time with all his available guns, he sent for me and made me quite a flattering little speech. He told me he had selected me for this attack, and described what he knew of the Mess House defences, as I have just described the place. He added, that if I found I could not take it, I was to place my men under cover and return myself to tell him what I had seen, etc. All he said conveyed to me the impression that he did not think we should succeed at our first onslaught. But I was in the seventh heaven of delight and extremely proud at being thus selected for what Sir Colin evidently deemed a difficult and a dangerous duty. I was pleased beyond measure with the kind expressions he used towards me—what children we all are, and how easily tickled by a great man's praise! What a lever it is for him to work with who knows how to use it deftly! But I confess that running then through the back of my brain was the unworthy suspicion that my company was to be employed upon a dangerous attempt which, although it might not succeed, might yet open the way for the Highlanders. We all suspected that he wished his despatch to announce that one of his old Crimean Highland Brigade regiments was the first to join hands with the besieged garrison. Was it not even possible that the Gordon Highlanders, who formed part of the garrison, should be ordered to make a sortie to meet the relieving army? How dramatic the story would then read in despatches of how the splendid Highlanders under the Scotch general Sir Colin Campbell, had,

with pipes playing, fought their way into Lucknow to relieve another distinguished Highland regiment that was closely besieged there! Surely, bonfires would have blazed on every hill north of the Tweed in honour of such a national achievement!

Thoughts such as these were in my men's heads also. They may have been unworthy of the great, the splendid soldier to whom they applied. But after all, the conviction that inspired them sharpened the rowels of the spur which stimulated all ranks in my company at the moment, and made them determine that no breechesless Highlanders should get in front of them that day. I overheard many of them express that determination in very explicit Saxon English. They continued to be outspoken upon this point until, somewhat later in the day, they saw me in the big square of the Motee Mahul shake hands with Captain Tinling of our regiment, who with his company had just made a sortie from the besieged garrison in order to meet the relieving force as we approached. Thus, the first greetings between besieged and besieger were between two companies of my battalion, a circumstance all the regiment was proud of. But this fact was not recorded in any despatch. It is this intense feeling of regimental rivalry that is the life-blood of our old, historic Army, and makes it what it is in action. But some Scotch generals were at this time prone to magnify the noble deeds of Scotch battalions in a way that seriously irritated those from England and Ireland. Neither Sir Hope Grant nor Adrian Hope ever did so. Though both were ardent and proud Scotchmen they did ample justice to all soldiers, whether they came from the hills of Scotland, the banks of the Shannon, the mountains of Wales or the shires of England.

Having "front formed" my company, we started at a good steady double for the Mess House. I had with me my three subalterns, Carter, Herford and Haig, and close behind my company came that of Captain Irby, of my battalion. That old friend and best of comrades was, as usual, smiling and using strong language to all around him; with him was my good friend Dr., now Sir Robert Jackson, our regimental assistant surgeon. I steadied my men and "whipped them in" at the garden wall as we scrambled over it, and then made for the open doorway of the Mess House itself. It was a fine, strongly built square building, and as I reached the masonry-reveted ditch round it, I rejoiced to find the drawbridge down, and quite passable. It had suffered, however, from the heavy bombardment we had kept up so long upon the position generally, and it was broken at places. As I ran across it, no sepoy was to be seen anywhere! I ran to the corresponding door on the opposite side of the house, and could see the enemy as they scuttled quickly from the bullets some of my men were firing to help them on their way. The garden in that direction seemed fairly full of them. My bugler sounded the 90th call and the advance as we crossed the drawbridge, and I soon found my "pal," Captain Irby, with his company beside me: with them also came a number of the 53rd Regiment. No corps in India had a more deservedly high fighting reputation. It was mostly composed of reckless, dare-devil Irishmen, but at that time many of its company officers were middle-aged men who had been too long in India. An old captain of that regiment now came forward and wanted to find out from me whether he or I was the senior as a captain, and therefore in command of the place. I don't remember his name, though I do his face. I am afraid my answer was not couched in

very polite terms, and I saw no more of him for the rest of the day.

Some one in after years asserted that I claimed the honour of having hoisted a Union Jack upon this Mess House when we took it. My answer was, that it was taken by my company, immediately supported by Captain Irby's company, also of the 90th Light Infantry, but I did not know who the hero was that had hoisted a flag upon it: all I knew was, that it was not I who had done so, and that no flag was hoisted upon the Mess House whilst I was in it, and as to what took place after my company had gone through it to take the Motee Mahul, I could say nothing.

The enemy opened a heavy fire upon the house as soon as we got into it; I had no orders as to what we should do if we succeeded in taking the place, so pointing to a very large and fine building to our left front I said to my good cheery comrade, Captain Irby—who laughed at everything—"You go and take it, whilst I take the place to our right." The building he took I knew well later on, as I lived in it for a couple of weeks after the final capture of Lucknow. It was called the "Tara Kothee" or "House of the Stars," as the Astronomer Royal of the Oudh Court lived there with his instruments. The building I selected to make for seemed an extensive place, but I did not know then that it was the Moti Mahul Palace, which joined the advanced position recently occupied by the headquarters of my own Battalion in the Chattah Munzil. Followed by my subalterns and men I got over the garden wall of the Mess House in the direction of the Residency. We were then in a broad road up which the enemy were firing pretty merrily from the Kaisar Bagh Palace and neighbouring buildings, so we passed it at a run to obtain shelter in a sort of open arcade-like place

outside the Moti Mahul Palace wall and close to the great gate into it. This "Motee Mahul" or "Pearl Palace" was surrounded by a thick masonry wall at least twenty feet in height, and was the home of the Begum. There stood a high detached wall, some fifteen yards in extent, in front of the entrance, so that although you could drive round this sort of outer "tambour," no matter where you stood you could not see into the courtyard within. The enemy had recently built up the two entrances round this tambour into the palace square, the fresh brickwork being well loopholed. In fact, they had thus provided that face of the palace with a good flanking defence. From its loopholes the enemy at once opened fire upon us. What was to be done? We could only stay where we were by taking forcible possession of those loopholes. When two hostile bodies are thus separated, it is naturally the pluckier of the two who maintains himself at the loopholes. In this instance the Pandees soon gave up the question of ownership in our favour. But they occasionally contrived to sneak a shot through by crawling along the ground with a loaded musket, and inserting its muzzle suddenly into a loophole they managed somehow or other to pull the trigger on the chance of hitting some one. I had a few men wounded by this process, and was consequently anxious to dig a hole as quickly as possible through this newly constructed brickwork, whose freshly laid mortar was still soft. The old walls round the palace were too high and too solid to admit of our either climbing over, or of our burrowing under them. I called to those in rear to send me a few crowbars and pickaxes, and in a short time we saw men in the near distance coming with some. My old servant Andrews, seeing these men were going astray, ran into the open to put them right again, and as he did so he was laid low by a shot

from a loophole that, not being one of those looking down where my men were, I had not obtained possession of. I ran into the road where he fell, and getting my arms under him proceeded to drag him under cover. Whilst doing so, another shot, coming from a loophole not ten feet off—fired at me, I presume—went through him. I soon had him in a place of safety, and I think my old and valued friend, now Sir Robert Jackson, who was always in the thick of every fight, then one of our assistant surgeons, patched him up temporarily. But, poor fellow, he was never able to serve again, and died some years afterwards from this wound when serving in the Corps of Commissioners. A braver or more daring soldier I never knew. He was a pure Cockney.

The newly arrived tools were soon in use, and with them a hole was being rapidly made through the lately built loop-holed wall, when a civilian made his appearance. My first idea was that he had come out from the Residency. Asked who he was, he said he was Mr. Kavanagh who—as already mentioned—had recently joined us at the Alum Bagh from Sir James Outram, for the purpose of pointing out to Sir Colin Campbell the best road by which he could reach the Residency. He said he had lived so long in Lucknow that he knew well the locality we were in, and that if I would go with him he would show me a way round by which I could easily get into the Motee Mahul. I did so, but thought he did not know his way about as well as he had led me to suppose. At last he took me to another gate, but it was also built up. I consequently made my way back quickly to where I had left some of my men busily engaged in making a hole through the wall that shut us out from the great entrance. As I approached, I caught sight of the soles of a pair of boots and the lower part of a man's legs, the rest of

his body being through the small hole just made, which others were still working hard to enlarge. I asked who it was: "Ensign Haig" was the answer. I have seen many a reckless deed done in action, but I never knew of a more dare-devil exhibition of pluck than this was. In any other regiment this young ensign would have had the Victoria Cross, but to ask for that decoration was not the custom in the 90th Light Infantry.

The hole grew rapidly bigger, and one by one we crawled through it until the whole company were within the tambour. I took them at once into the open courtyard, round one side of which there were still stray knots of the enemy who fired at us from open doors and windows. As I marched along it, keeping close to the buildings, a man suddenly made a fierce cut at me with his tulwar which nearly shaved my head as I just managed to avoid it. They began to fire through small loopholes that had been pierced through the walls of the buildings in which they had taken refuge. I had several of these holes covered over with little baskets, so common in all native buildings, which well propped up from without by sticks prevented those inside from aiming well at us outside. We there killed many of the enemy, at which work we were busily employed when suddenly there was an explosion on the opposite, the western, side of the courtyard, and out of the cloud of dust and smoke that rose from it, there ran forward an officer and a number of British soldiers coming from Mr. Martin's house and the Residency direction. To the astonishment of us all, it was Captain Tinling of my regiment with his company behind him. They had sprung a mine to blow down the palace wall to enable them to make a sortie in order to meet our relieving force. We had both too much to do to squander time in commonplace talk, but

to all ranks of those two companies the meeting was indeed a hearty one, and none of the survivors are likely to forget it.

Shortly afterwards there came out from the Residency the chivalrous Outram, and with him the stern Ironside, General Havelock, looking ill and worn.

In that square, where the two companies of my regiment, the relieved and the relievers, met, there shortly afterwards took place the celebrated meeting between Sir Colin Campbell and the two besieged generals. The well-known picture of that event shows the main gate by which my company forced its way in, and though there is a theatrical air about the picture, which represents every one looking clean and tidy, which none of us certainly did look, the main features of that remarkable and historic event are well represented on the canvas.

Whilst in this palace square, our Brigadier, Colonel Adrian Hope, took me aside and said, "I advise you to keep out of Sir Colin's way: he is furious with you for pushing on beyond the Mess House, for the capture of which his orders to you alone extended." "Rather hard on me," was my answer. However I was fully compensated for this unlooked-for injustice on the part of the Commander-in-Chief, by the extremely kind and flattering terms in which Adrian Hope spoke to me of what my company had achieved. I confess, however, that I felt much hurt by what he told me, though I fully understood the reason; I had upset Sir Colin's little plan for the relief of Lucknow by the 93rd Highlanders.

Colonel Adrian Hope said, "Your men must be tired, take them back along the main road and halt upon it near the Shah Najif; they will be sure of having a quiet night there, and they want it."

Rather sore, very sore indeed I may say, at what my Brigadier had told me, I marched my men off to the appointed spot, piled arms upon the side of the road, and all having had something to eat, we lay down there for a good night's rest. I don't know how long I had been in the land of dreams when I was roused by the angry voice of one of my subalterns, a charming man named Carter. As he was using strong language—and he could use strong expletives upon occasion—I inquired what the matter was: he said that some infernal son of a gun had put one of the legs of his charpoy—a native bed—right in the middle of his stomach. I tried to soothe him, and we were all soon once more soundly forgetful of life's miseries.

At the first streak of dawn I awoke and sat up, somewhat stiff, for I was cold, having no greatcoat. My eye lit upon the offending charpoy that Carter had condemned in strong words to the "old gentleman's" care during the previous night. Its occupant woke up at the same moment, and to my horror I saw it was Sir Colin. He also had come back to that quiet spot on the road for some sleep, and some one had found a charpoy for him. In placing it on the road, Sir Colin had accidentally planted one of its legs upon my subaltern Carter's stomach. The whole position under ordinary circumstances would have been intensely comical had it not been for what Adrian Hope had told me the evening before. Sir Colin saw me in a moment, and shaking his fist at me with a pleasant smile, he said, "If I had but caught you yesterday!" His anger had left him, and no man ever said nicer or more complimentary things to me than he did then. He ended our conversation by telling me I should have my promotion. He did not know that two years before I had already been promised it as soon as I should complete the

regulation period of six years' service required for that rank. What a lucky man I have always been in my relations with all the brave and gallant soldiers of every rank I have had to deal with in peace and in war, at home and abroad!

The next day all arrangements were made for our temporary withdrawal from Lucknow. The news from Cawnpore was very bad, for everything had gone wrong there. The mutinied Gwalior contingent had attacked the place, and had taken the city and the storehouses where Havelock's army had left their baggage; had driven General Windham within his entrenchments, where everything was said to be in confusion; in fact, a capable leader was urgently required there.

In addition to all this, Sir Colin was heavily encumbered with sick and wounded soldiers, and with the care of a crowd of about 500 British women and children of the Lucknow garrison. Until he had put all these in some place of safety he was as helpless for action as would be the giant overweighted with chains.

A screened roadway was made from the Residency to the nearest of our outposts—which consisted of my company—near the breach in the Motee Mohul wall, through which Captain Tinling's company of my battalion had come to meet us, as already described. Behind this cover the women and children and the wounded were to be withdrawn. It was very desirable to keep from the enemy's knowledge as long as possible the fact that we were about to abandon Lucknow for the present. That object was most cleverly and successfully secured. It was a fine piece of staff work and management that did great credit to Sir Colin and to all the staff officers concerned.

Every one coming out of Lucknow had thus to pass through

my picket, so all my company had a good opportunity of seeing the women whom they had fought for—alas, too many of them were widows. Their faces bespoke privations, bad food and illness, and their careworn features told us not only of bodily suffering but of sorrow bravely endured. Amongst this long straggling crowd were widows and orphans left by gallant soldiers who had nobly died for England in the defence of the place. Let us hope that these helpless women and their children were all well provided for by the country for whom their husbands and their fathers had so gallantly fought. Many of the women were heavily laden with bundles, and some had large bags filled with rupees which weighed them down. Many upon finding themselves safe amongst the relieving army put down their babies and their parcels to converse with my men. But I had to remind them that although hidden from the enemy's view they had no protection there from his round shot. In fact, I had to hurry them along. They seemed too sad and down in their luck to manifest any joy at their escape. A very few drove in buggies drawn by attenuated horses. I did not see a happy or a contented or a smiling face amongst that crowd; not one of them said a gracious word to the soldiers who had saved them, a fact which my men remarked upon. Indeed, poor creatures, they did not make a favourable impression upon any of us, for they seemed cross; they certainly grumbled much at everything and everybody.

November 22, 1857, found me still on picket on the path we had opened out between the garrison and the relieving force. One incident struck me as illustrating the indifference to human life that war tends to engender. During that afternoon a captain of my battalion, who belonged to

the besieged garrison, marched out with his company in charge of the State prisoners. Upon reaching my post, he halted to count them as they went past to assure himself they were all there. As the last man of his company approached—he was well known as a good fighting soldier but not of irreproachable character—one prisoner was missing. My friend and comrade was dreadfully distressed, and called out to the soldier, "Where's your prisoner?" The reply came at once, "We had great difficulty in getting him along, sir, and at last he stopped altogether and refused to go any further, so I was obliged to shoot him."

To him the whole affair seemed a mere matter of no moment. I am afraid that warfare, especially of the nature we were then engaged in, tends much to blunt man's best feelings, though it also develops the noblest man is capable of.

My company did not move off until all the garrison had passed out. Then the three *Transit* companies of the 90th Light Infantry marched silently away and rejoined our regimental headquarters after an absence from it of over seven months. When we had reached the Martiniere, I was ordered to halt and pile arms not far from a deserted battery of the enemy's. It was now daylight, and most of us were soon asleep; I know I was. I was roused suddenly by something hitting me in the face, a small clod of earth I think, and upon jumping to my feet I saw a huge cloud of white smoke rising up from this battery. There was no explosion, so it must have been a quantity of loose powder that had been accidentally ignited by some careless smoker. A blackened object rushed madly from this smoke, and when in a few minutes afterwards I saw the poor fellow lying before me, he said he was Private Pierce—my plucky and faithful servant

who had behaved so well when we were shipwrecked. He had probably inhaled the flame, for his inside seemed to have been burned, and when I saw him some time later on—he was then unconscious—yellow pus was running from his mouth. He could not then say a word, and we never knew how this terrible accident occurred, for he died very soon.

Our retirement from Lucknow was carefully planned and admirably carried out by Sir Colin Campbell. General Havelock died whilst this retirement was being effected.

I have always believed from what I was told of General Havelock's advance upon Lucknow, that, gallant soldier and well experienced in Indian warfare though he was, he was worn out and debilitated from long and arduous service in India when the storm of the great Mutiny first swept over the Bengal Presidency. The son—a man of untiring energy and considerable ability, a real fighting soldier by nature—I knew intimately, as he served under me upon the staff in Canada, and I had also met him in India during the Mutiny. A more daring or a braver soul never existed. He thoroughly understood war in all its phases, and was well read in its science. Though at times eccentric, he was a grand fellow all round. He helped his father greatly during all the fighting between Cawnpore and Lucknow.

Sir Colin Campbell, having thus relieved the Lucknow garrison, moved back to the Alum Bāgh on November 24. The serious condition of affairs at Cawnpore was at the moment the point of most urgent consideration, and demanded his immediate attention.

The Gwalior contingent of about 5,000 trained sepoys, joined by a large number of mutineers from the native army of Bengal and by a crowd of Budmashes from the surrounding districts, making in all a force of over 10,000 fighting men,

had hemmed in General Windham. His hastily constructed entrenchments were little more than a very weak *tête-de-pont* protecting the bridge of boats by which Havelock's force had crossed the Ganges on its way to Lucknow. It would be impossible to continue the war in Oudh unless Cawnpore was in our possession and our line of communications from it to Allahabad and Calcutta kept open. It was therefore of paramount importance that the Commander-in-Chief should hurry back in all haste to relieve General Windham. In fact, to make good our possession of Cawnpore and of its bridge of boats was the most pressing necessity of the moment. But Sir Colin resolved to leave General Sir James Outram with a division of British troops in camp near the Alum Bagh. This would be at least an outward evidence of our rule in a province largely composed of fanatical Mohammedans and of high-caste, English-hating Rajpoots and Brahmins, all accustomed to the use of arms from childhood. It would also so engage the attention of the native rulers of Oudh that they would not be likely to send help to the enemy at Cawnpore. As soon as Sir Colin could dispose of the Gwalior contingent, make Cawnpore safe, and re-establish order in its neighbourhood, it was Lord Canning's intention that he should return to the Alum Bagh for the purpose of finally taking and permanently occupying Lucknow. I explain this further on.

On November 27 Sir Colin started for Cawnpore, taking all the sick and wounded, all the women and children brought out of the Residency, and his siege train with him. None of us outsiders had any conception of the very critical position Cawnpore was in at the moment. We subsequently learnt from Sir James Outram that Sir Colin had arrived just in time to save the Cawnpore position, but he

did not tell us that Sir Colin had found everything and everybody at sixes and sevens, like a beaten army, within the place. Having engaged and heavily defeated the enemy, he then proceeded to clear them from the Doab between the Ganges and the Jumna rivers. This he did effectually, and at once began to collect the army that subsequently enabled him to do the same in Oudh also.

After Sir Colin Campbell's relief of Lucknow, many wished him to push his success further and take final possession of the place, but he wisely decided otherwise. Although not yet fully aware of the critical position into which General Windham had fallen at Cawnpore, he knew enough to make him anxious for the safety of that city, then the most important link in his line of communications. For no moment did he pay heed to this advice which some then pressed upon him. He would have none of it. But he had taken much trouble to make the enemy believe he meant to follow it, and that a general assault of the city was imminent. To further impress this belief upon the Lucknow people, he opened fire upon the Kaiser Bagh on November 20, 1857, breaching its walls in three places, and, as it was then believed, killing many of its garrison. It was to him an anxious time. In his despatch upon the relief of the besieged garrison, he says that during November 20, 21, and 22, 1857, the long line he held extended from the Lucknow Residency to the Dil Khoosha Palace, and that during those days his army was but one great outlying picket, of which every man was always on duty. To this statement I can add, from what I felt and saw, that every man, from the general to the bugler, was on his mettle, and had the fullest confidence in their commander.

To have conveyed the 500 women and children, the

1,000 sick and wounded, safely away, without a hitch, and without any attack being made upon them, was, I think, the best piece of staff work I have ever seen. The garrison withdrew through my picket at midnight on November 22, the whole operations being carried out by the brigadier-general, the Hon. Adrian Hope, one of the most rising men then in our Army. So completely were the enemy taken in, that next morning they opened fire as usual upon the buildings we had held during the siege, and for some hours did not discover that we had vacated them.

This Sir Colin Campbell effected in the face of an enemy many times more numerous than the force he commanded. It was a great military achievement, and reflected the utmost credit upon all concerned. He had vindicated our national honour by what he had done, and rightly felt he must place these soldiers' families and his wounded in a place of safety before he undertook any new venture.

When he had crossed the Ganges in November, 1857, to relieve the Lucknow garrison, he left Sir Charles Windham at Cawnpore with a small garrison of British soldiers, subsequently made up to a force of about 2,000 fighting men. Cawnpore was then a position of the first importance to us, and where we had constructed a good bridge of boats over the Ganges, by which we communicated with the Alum Bagh. In fact, Cawnpore was the link which joined Oudh to our old Indian provinces, and through which our reinforcements from Calcutta reached us. Benares, Allahabad, and Cawnpore were the three important garrisons that joined the army in Oudh to our base on the river Hooghley.

As a friend and companion I liked General Windham much when I came to know him well in Canada. A man

of the world, he had many charming qualities: was never hard upon others in word or deed, and always inclined to make allowances for human failings. But when in command of the column that assaulted the Redan, he had been unfortunate as I have already mentioned in a previous chapter. He had this other chance afforded him at Cawnpore two years later, and he was again unfortunate. But it must be admitted that he had an extremely difficult game to play at Cawnpore, having not only to defend his weak entrenchments, but also to keep an enemy overwhelmingly superior in numbers at a sufficient distance to prevent them from destroying the boat bridge over the Ganges there. The Gwalior contingent, a large and fairly well drilled native force, and furnished with field and heavy artillery, had mutinied and moved down upon him in a body. Driven back to his entrenchments, the position was only saved by the timely arrival of Sir Colin and the force with which he had just relieved Lucknow. I cannot help adding, however, that in my opinion Sir Colin might have finished his work at Lucknow and reached Cawnpore two days earlier. Had he done so, General Windham's abandonment of his camp and the retreat within his entrenchments would have been avoided.

CHAPTER XXI

With Sir James Outram at the Alum Bagh

IT had long been customary with the great Oudh zameendars to keep on foot considerable bodies of well armed feudal sepoys, undisciplined according to our notions, but good fighters and loyal to their chiefs. Most of those great landowners lived in considerable state in their well-built forts, some of them well provided with guns, and all of considerable size and importance. For the previous half century or more they had lived at constant war with one another, and thus both the use of arms and the practice of war on a small scale were common to all classes in the Province. The Commander-in-Chief determined therefore to leave for the present a weak Division under Sir James Outram encamped near the Alum Bagh to represent British rule in Oudh, until he could return, when he had disposed of the Gwalior contingent then attacking Cawnpore. Apart from the fact that Sir James Outram was one of our very best generals, his intimate knowledge of Oudh and of its affairs, of its chiefs and their history, eminently qualified him for that important command. My battalion, now the Scottish Rifles, formed part of that Division.

The position he took up was astride the Cawnpore Road, about a mile south of the Alum Bagh and two miles from the suburbs of Lucknow city. The right rested upon the

fort and neighbouring jeels of Jellahabad; the left was in the open, but protected by the villages, which, within a 2,000 yards' radius of our left flank had been placed in a state of defence. For a dead level country it possessed some elements of defensive strength, and it was above all things a defiant challenge to the very numerous enemy in front and all round to come and attack us if they dared.

Sir James Outram's Division consisted of over 200 Military Train, then being converted into cavalry, and a few Volunteers (British) also mounted. The British battalions were of the Northumberland Fusiliers, of the Gordon Highlanders, of the Seaforth Highlanders, of the York and Lancaster, of the Scottish Rifles, and of the Madras Fusiliers; there were two native battalions, Brazier's Sikhs, and a Madras native infantry regiment. The Division was divided into two Brigades, both of which were commanded by absolutely incompetent men. They were the two senior colonels in the Division, and in those days no other qualifications were required. They were both gallant gentlemen who would ride straight for their enemy whenever he presented himself, but it was a parody upon sense to call them generals, for neither had any knowledge of the science or the art of war. We are still an extraordinary nation as regards our military system, but we were then even much worse. The grand total of the Division was 3,395 English, and 1,047 natives. All were seasoned to fighting and all were the survival of the fittest, the weaker having already succumbed to disease, or being still in or on their way to the hospitals at Cawnpore.

Our *Transit* detachment of three companies was now to rejoin our battalion headquarters. Our late Brigadier,

Adrian Hope, under whom it was a real pleasure to serve, came to our bivouac to bid us good-bye. He made us a little speech, thanking all ranks in most graceful words for their gallant services. We thoroughly appreciated such praise from so loveable, so brilliant a leader. Alas, my great friend Barnston, by far the best officer of any rank in Colonel Hope's brigade, was not there to hear him: he died of his wounds soon after, and without doubt he went to the bright abode that is surely reserved for all good soldiers who die in action, and where the daring Hope, the young brigadier we all esteemed so highly, was so soon to follow him. Our detachment gave our late Brigadier three hearty cheers as he rode away: we were never to see him again in this world. He fell fighting nobly soon afterwards.

There were two batteries of field artillery in this Division, both commanded by remarkable men. One by Captain Olpherts—invariably called to the day of his death Billy Olpherts—the other by a clever fellow named Maude. Both were as brave as God ever creates brave men, and they vied with one another in deeds of reckless daring. In this splendid quality there was no choosing between them. But Billy Olpherts—an Irishman all over—appealed most to the affection of every one who was privileged to know him well. Whenever he lost men he generally came to my battalion for others to replace them, and so popular was he in it, where he was well known, that he always found fine reckless spirits anxious to join him. The above-mentioned Battalion of our then newly invented Military Train, which had been diverted from China for service during this Mutiny, was a valuable military asset. Though not suited by figure or

length of leg to be cavalry soldiers, they were white men and were being rapidly converted into useful soldiers on horseback, under an officer of the 9th Lancers.

Altogether, notwithstanding its drawbacks in the shape of Brigadiers, it was a splendid fighting division of seasoned veterans, all ranks thoroughly imbued with the fullest confidence in their able General, the daring fighter, the practical administrator, and the generous comrade of all soldiers, Sir James Outram. Of the many leaders I have served under, he possessed the affection and the confidence of all ranks more than any other. Over me he exercised a great, an enduring spell. I did not know him well personally: I worshipped him at a distance. His manner both with men and officers was most captivating, and if any General more than another deserves the special gratitude of his country for great services rendered in Oudh during the Mutiny, I hope I am not presumptuous in saying that I would certainly give the palm to Sir James Outram. And here perhaps I may describe his character as I learnt it from others, and as I judged it myself at the time and still continue to estimate it. Upon each and all of us he made a deep impression. Out generally at daybreak, I can see him in my mind's eye now as he walked up to my outlying picket, his horse led behind him, with the invariable cheroot in his mouth, and a cheery "Good morning" to all around him. If a kossid had lately arrived with any news, he would usually read it out to the men, who thoroughly appreciated his familiar kindness with them. His presence anywhere made others bold and daring, and seemed in an unaccountable way to stiffen the weak knees of the poor in spirit. The very coward took heart to follow him into danger. There was something magnetic about his high

courage that inspired general confidence. One forgot one's own self in admiration of his determined bearing, and at all times and under all circumstances you recognized the superiority of his manly iron nerve. I was always told by those who knew him far better than I did, that his chivalrous sympathy for those in trouble was on a par with his heroism. He laughed at danger and mocked at difficulties. A keen sportsman in every sense, he excelled in manly exercises. Few Indian officials knew the native character as thoroughly as he did. This insight into their thought and mode of reasoning enabled him to foresee what they would do under specified conditions and circumstances. In this innate faculty lay much of the influence he exercised over them and through which he inspired them with confidence in his justice. Styled the "Bayard of India" by another great soldier as brave as he was and perhaps blessed with a more brilliant genius, his name will be long remembered by the descendants of the wild native tribes he ruled so wisely. It will never be forgotten by our soldiers who knew him in Oudh as long as manly daring and fidelity to duty is held in honour by our race. Our men repaid his kindness and geniality by a real reverence and a sincere affection. In January, 1858, Sir James Outram said that according to the best information obtainable, the number of the enemy then near his position at the Alum Bagh was over 100,000 fighting men. This estimate, of course, included many thousands of Lucknow budmashes, the armed and turbulent scum of a fighting and factious population.[1]

Life at Alum Bagh camp was monotonous, but by no

[1] I take this estimate from a published dispatch of Sir James Outram, dated February 28, 1858.

means dull. The want of books was felt most, far more than the want of wine or other luxuries. Of course we had races, for where is it that two or three Englishmen are ever gathered together for any length of time without a race meeting? We had sports also, in both of which amusements the men took great interest, and I have no doubt backed their favourites freely, for at that time our men were "full of money." They had not had any other opportunity of spending their pay for a long while. Then we occasionally had false alarms, those most worrying of all incidents in a campaign, to occupy us. The regimental bazaars were always rife with startling rumours, and we only wanted a halfpenny "daily" to cheer the imagination on to further developments in that line.

Our picket duty was heavy, and done, at least in my battalion, by companies, the true system, the only possibly good system on active service. I rather enjoyed this work, although it kept me out of bed for the night, and often meant a great deal of walking round my line of sentries to see that all were on the alert and no enemy near at hand.

Either one or two days before Christmas, 1857, my company was on outlying picket in a village about a mile in front of our camp, when the following curious incident occurred. I have already mentioned a Major McIntyre, of the Gordon Highlanders, who had, as I thought unfairly, put me and some brother officers under arrest when we were under his command in the Alum Bagh Palace. I was consequently prejudiced against him and always avoided him. Upon the occasion I now refer to he had, as field officer of the day, all the outposts under his command during his twenty-four hours' tour of duty. We had had a quiet night, and as day was breaking the following morning I

clambered to the flat roof of the biggest house in the village to have a good look-out all round, and Major McIntyre quickly followed me there. The mutineers in front were playing our ordinary reveillé on their drums and fifes as they had learnt it in their regiments. A sentry stood between me and McIntyre, and we all three peered earnestly into the twilight towards the enemy's position. Just then two wild geese flew over at about duck-shot range from us. Quick as lightning this major snatched the sentry's rifle and fired. One of the geese fell not far in front of us. Had he not been known well as a first rate shot I should have looked upon this as a mere "fluke," but in his case one could not think so. Quite involuntarily on my part I exclaimed, "Well done, a splendid shot."

I was soon relieved and marched my men back to camp. In the afternoon a native servant came to my tent with a note, a bottle of port wine, and this wild goose. The note was very civil, asking me to accept the goose for my Christmas dinner the day following, and hoping I would wash it down with the bottle of wine he ventured to send me. So ended my enmity with this old major. He had entered the Army when I was still in swaddling clothes.

I rode a great deal for exercise every day, and there were some jeels about where my old chum Irby, an unerring shot, managed often to pick up a few wild duck. He had a curious soldier servant whom he had trained as a retriever, and no matter how deep the water where a duck fell, he quickly brought it to his master.

General Outram's spies frequently brought news of intended attacks upon our position, and once or twice the enemy made some show in that direction, though they usually preferred to keep at a respectful distance from us.

Our general was not a man to be caught napping, and long experience of natives enabled him to foresee their intentions and to thwart their plans. Every evening they enlivened us with their old regimental bands at tattoo, and it was amusing to listen to the old familiar airs they played. Upon more than one occasion some of the more adventurous and fanatical sepoys actually came close up to our outposts; but our rifle fire was not to their taste. One of these attacks was headed by a fellow dressed up as a Hunnoman, the Hindoo Monkey God. He was encountered by Brazier's Sikhs, and although almost riddled with bullets, one of which took out both his eyes, he was not killed. The Sikhs kept him afterwards as a sort of sacred Joss, and treated him most kindly.

Major Olpherts, whom I have already mentioned, was an intimate friend of all the officers of my battalion. Danger, I believe, amused as well as interested him. His battery was a sort of military curiosity in every way. His gun-carriages were old and always on the verge of absolute dissolution, and as for his harness, it seemed to be tied together with pieces of string. The battery had gone into Lucknow with General Havelock, and was in every sense a scratch lot. But the heart of every man belonging to it was stout indeed, all ranks taking their tone from their gallant dare-devil captain. I knew him well up to the time of his death, only a short while ago, and I am proud to remember that he always regarded me as a real friend and comrade.

One day there was more than usual semblance of a serious attack upon us. Our bugles had suddenly sounded the "Assembly," and I was soon busily employed inspecting my men on their "private parade." I heard the galloping

of horses near me, and upon looking round saw it was Olphert's battery going as fast as their wretched equipment would admit of. First came dear old Billy himself, clad in garments he had used in the Crimean War, a fez cap and a Turkish grégo, the latter tied round his waist with a piece of rope. About fifty yards behind came his well-known battery sergeant-major in a sort of shooting coat made from the green baize of a billiard table; then a gun, every driver flogging as hard as he could; then another at a long distance in rear. One broke down, to the unpractised eye hopelessly, immediately in front of my company. Some of the spokes had gone: they all rattled. We were all highly amused and interested, for many men in the battery belonged to the 90th Light Infantry. What would the smart young major of horse artillery at Woolwich have thought of such a battery? I laugh even now as I recall its appearance on parade, but as I think of the great services it rendered at a very trying time during the Mutiny, and wherever they were required, I am proud to have served in the same division with it, and to have been the friend of the splendid soldier who commanded it. Would that he were alive to read these pages: I wonder if there be a lending library in heaven.

CHAPTER XXII

The Siege and Capture of Lucknow, 1858

THE Governor-General can dictate to the Commander-in-Chief the general line of policy to be adopted in any war, but Lord Canning was wise enough to interfere very little in the military plans adopted in 1857–8 for what really constituted the re-conquest of India.

The relief of the Lucknow garrison being effected and the serious attack of the Gwalior contingent upon Cawnpore having been repulsed with loss, the great question was, in what direction could our military forces be now used to the best advantage? Our new ally, Jung Bahadoor, at that time a somewhat "doubtful quantity" in our military calculations, was to be in Soogowlee in our territory about December 21, 1857, marching upon Goruckpoor. The question was in what direction should he be ordered to advance? Westward to Fyzabad, or south by Azingweh and Jaunpore across the Ganges and Jumna into Bundelcund? In other words, which should have priority in our plans, the reconquest of Oudh or the restoration of law and order in our old provinces of Rohilkund, the Doab and Bundelcund? It was more a matter of policy to be decided by the Governor-General than a military point for the Commander-in-Chief's decision. Sir Colin Campbell was in favour of the first plan, but very properly referred the matter to Lord Canning. His decision was that the

complete re-establishment of our sovereignty in Oudh should have precedence over all other proposed schemes at that moment. He gave his reasons for thinking so, and I think they were unanswerable. A rival power to ours had been set up in Oudh, and at the moment every eye in India was fixed upon that kingdom. Our proceedings there had consequently become more important in native opinion than any measure we might adopt for the re-establishment of law and order in our older districts.

With that loyalty to those in authority over him which was one of Colin Campbell's strong characteristics, he at once accepted Lord Canning's decision without demur, and threw himself heart and soul into the operations necessary to give it effect.

On February 27, 1858, Sir Colin Campbell rode into the Alum Bagh Camp to have an interview with Sir James Outram. He had just encamped within a few miles from us, with what was for India in those days a big regular army of over 3,000 sabres and nearly 12,500 bayonets, and with a large number of heavy guns and several batteries of horse and field artillery. Jung Bahadoor's and Brigadier General Frank's column were daily expected, and upon their arrival it was hoped we should have an army with a total strength of about 30,000 men and 164 guns of all sorts available for the capture of Lucknow.

For Sir Colin every man of our army in Oudh had a good word to say. Every inch a soldier, he had a sincere sympathy with all men who worked hard under him. The bravest of men, he liked brave soldiers, and they knew that he did so. All ranks were proud to serve under him, though men not born north of the Tweed felt they were somewhat handicapped when he estimated the respective

merits of the troops under his command. He was essentially a man of strong prejudices, fond of having the well born round him, but having little belief in those who had not had, like himself, considerable Indian experience. He seemed, as far as I could judge, to be somewhat prejudiced against those who had served on the staff in the Crimea. Colonel Pakenham, afterwards Lord Longford, had there proved himself to be a very able staff officer, but had never served before in India. Colonel Wetherall was certainly one of our very best and most rising officers in the Crimea, where all who knew him well trusted and thought highly of him. But he too had never served in India. Lord Clyde employed both of these colonels when they arrived in Calcutta, both being, I believe, strongly recommended to him by H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, but he did not make that use of them as, according to my estimate of their military value, they deserved and were entitled to expect.

General Sir William Mansfield, his chief of the staff, was possessed of a rare ability that would have placed him high in any non-military walk of life. His was a cold, calculating and logical brain of rare quality, and he was doubtless of much use to his master. The minutes in which he conveyed that master's instructions to his generals in the field are fine samples of clearness and perspicuity. But I think I may say that no one liked him, indeed many averred not even Lord Clyde. Numbers hated him as supercilious and inclined to presume upon the acknowledged fact of his great general ability. He was so short-sighted that he was of but little use in the field as a leader. Personally, I knew him but slightly, but the little I had to do with him impressed me much against him.

STRENGTH OF THE ENEMY

The task before Sir Colin in the winter of 1858–9—difficult in many respects—was rendered particularly so from the fact that fully ten battalions of British infantry, one of British cavalry, much of the Bengal artillery, and many of the Punjaub regiments had already become very weak in numbers and were fairly worn out by long marches and constant fighting since the Mutiny had burst upon us. England had sent India all the battalions she could spare from home and from her foreign possessions. She had few more to give, and we had not then had a Mr. Cardwell to provide us with an Army Reserve such as that which recently enabled us, after several long campaigns, to bring the Boer War to an end.

Whilst Sir James Outram occupied the Alum Bagh position between the Relief of Lucknow in November, 1857, and the return of Sir Colin Campbell in the beginning of March, 1858, the enemy had almost encircled Lucknow with a double line of substantial works, of which the Kaiser Bagh Palace was the citadel. It was said by those esteemed the wisest in all such calculations, that its defending army consisted of some 30,000 of our own disloyal Sepoys, and of at least 60,000 Oudh men besides, who had been accustomed from boyhood to carry arms.[1] Those hostile forces were amply supplied with guns, and the followers of the Prophet and the believers in Vishnu now joined cordially in what I may call a great effort to free Hindostan for ever of the unclean English who had ruled them for just a century.

The first move in our new game was necessarily the capture and final occupation of Lucknow. The plan for

[1] Many estimated the enemy opposed to us at a much higher figure.

what is commonly known as the "Seige of Lucknow" was ably conceived. Its principal feature was, that a considerable force should be thrown across the Goomtee River below the city and take up a position to enable its guns to enfilade and take in reverse the enemy's lately constructed works. Both General Havelock and Sir Colin Campbell had forced their way into Lucknow from the east, and the enemy had consequently assumed that our next attack would be delivered from the same direction. It was not therefore expected that we should find any large fortifications on the north bank of the Goomtee.

As Jung Bahadur had promised, he sent a Nepaulese division to co-operate in the taking of Lucknow. It numbered about 9,000 men, which brought up the force employed to the expected total of nearly 30,000, of which about 3,000 were cavalry, British and Native, and 10,000 were British infantry.

Almost all the British battalions in Sir Colin's army had recently arrived from home, and their smart clothing contrasted forcibly with the many-coloured "rags" of the troops in Outram's division of veterans.

It soon became bruited abroad that in the organization of the new army the 90th Light Infantry was no longer to be in Sir James Outram's division. This was sad news for all of us, for in his skill we trusted implicitly, and to him all ranks were personally and sincerely attached. We had at the time good reason to believe that he asked to have our battalion in his division, a fact which pleased us much, but it was not to be. The common "camp-shave" at the moment was, that Sir Colin was for some reason or other jealous of Outram and of his popularity with all those under him. But if this were so, Sir Colin certainly did not show

it in his dispositions for the capture of Lucknow, as he gave Outram command of the strong force he pushed across the Goomtee to attack the city from the north, the most important factor in his plan of operations. But if thus disappointed, all ranks of the *Transit's* three companies rejoiced to find themselves once more in Adrian Hope's Brigade. The other battalions in the brigade were the "Black Watch," the 93rd Highlanders, and a Punjaub regiment.

I shall make no attempt to describe the movements that ended in the capture of Lucknow by Sir Colin Campbell. The plan of operations bespoke a master's hand, and that plan was admirably carried out by his subordinate commanders. I content myself with a reference to the force I belonged to.

We started in the evening of March 7, 1858, for the Dil Khoosha Palace, where we halted the following day. The day after, March 9, we occupied the Martiniere, the enemy offering very little resistance, although they had erected a considerable amount of field works about it. By March 14 I may say Lucknow was in our possession without any very serious fighting. My battalion had marched into the Kaiser Bagh, a very fine palace with beautiful gardens. There, in front of the main building, was a canal with marble sides and a very handsomely carved marble bridge over it. The imposing and beautiful marble throne which is now in the King's garden at Windsor Castle stood near it. The effect was good, and the first view of the palace impressed me much with its lavish Eastern magnificence. There was a great deal of loot about, but throughout my soldiering career I have never been a looter. Not from any squeamish notions as to the iniquity of the game, for I

believe that, as a rule, to the victor should belong the spoils of war, but in the interests of order and of discipline. It is destruction to all that is best in the military training of the British Army for the officer to pillage alongside the private and possibly to dispute with him for the ownership of some valuable prize. But I know that others were richer by many pearls and much jewellery when they quitted than when they entered the Kaiser Bagh. I selected a nice open colonnade as my company's quarters for the coming night. Several doors opened into it, but they were locked. One door was soon kicked open—what is it that the "ammunition boot" will not kick open? The room inside was small and contained numerous chests. Some contained nothing but buckskin breeches, others top-boots, and some Highland and other British uniforms, all being old-fashioned in shape but evidently unused. We also found a photograph of the King of Oudh taken in a kilt and a Highland feather bonnet. It was curious, but not pretty. The fighting seemed over, so I strolled into an adjoining square where the headquarters of most of our companies were. One officer had a pile of Cashmere shawls, of which he gave me my choice of one to sleep on for the night. I took it back and laid it carefully on the ground in the colonnade where I rejoined my men. We managed to cook some food, but long before we could digest it the enemy made a faint-hearted attack upon us "all along the line." I had to go into a small mosque with tall minarets near at hand, whence we inflicted some loss upon the enemy. When everything quietened down again I returned to my colonnade, but my shawl was gone! Some one passing by, regarding it as a derelict, had "jumped it"—that is the looter's mild technical synonym for the ugly sounding

word " stole " ! And so I lost my one piece of loot, and that had been given to me.

I have no hesitation in saying that the loot secured by the rank and file of our army in Lucknow at that time was very injurious to its military efficiency and affected its discipline for a considerable time afterwards.

A clever man in imitation of Caesar's " *Veni, vidi, vici,*" had described Sir Charles Napier's conquest of Scind in the one word " *Peccavi.*" It was superior in wit to the Roman's alliterative description of his success, as Napier was commonly supposed to have sinned much in his attack upon the Ameers and by his annexation of their province. A witty friend of mine, Major the Hon. James Dormer, who was A.D.C. to Sir Colin Campbell, wrote as if from his general to describe his capture of Lucknow, " *Nunc fortunatus sum.*" [1] If not as elegant as Caesar's three words, nor as witty as Napier's supposed despatch, it passed muster in our camp, and amused many at a time when even a small joke was thankfully received.

[1] " I am in luck-now."

CHAPTER XXIII

On the Staff of the Oudh Division, 1858

WITHIN a few days of these events Sir Colin Campbell selected me for staff employment, and appointed me Quarter-Master-General to Major-General Sir Hope Grant, who had just been given command of the Oudh division. I was extremely glad, not only at being given a position on the staff, but to be employed under so able and distinguished a general. Common report told me that he was one of the generals in whom Sir Colin Campbell had the most implicit confidence, and whom he had selected to command the Oudh division, then, I think, the most important division in India.

Sir Hope Grant was then just fifty years of age: a tall man of muscle and bone and no unnecessary flesh about him. He had all the best instincts of a soldier, and was a brave daring man that no amount of work could tire. He was a perfect horseman, who thoroughly understood the animal he rode, and was understood by it. No heat seemed to affect him, and long service in India had taught him the character, ways and mode of thought common to the Indian people. He was liked by every good man who knew him, and all those with whom he was intimate loved him. I never met a man with a higher sense of duty. His manner was against him. He was often confused in

his conversation, and always experienced some difficulty in putting his thoughts into words, or in describing clearly what he wished you to do. He knew exactly himself what it was he wanted done, but had not the knack of imparting it clearly to others.

He very seldom used a field glass of any sort in action, for his sight was very good, and he quickly and accurately took in the enemy's position before the fight began. I often heard him maintain that after troops had been deployed for action the general in command could exercise little or no further influence over the fortune of the day. Once fully engaged himself in any battle, he interfered little in its further progress until the pursuit began. Being in early life a first rate man with hounds, it was often a puzzle to me that he should have so much difficulty in taking in, either from a map or from personal inspection, the general features of a country, the direction of its rivers, the lie of its hills, etc. Like the great majority of those who were his contemporaries in early life, he was imperfectly educated upon all subjects except that of music. That he thoroughly understood, scientifically as well as practically. He played delightfully upon the violoncello, and always told us laughingly that he owed to it his first chance in the Army. It was thus: General Lord Saltoun, who had been appointed to command a Brigade in our China war, of 1839–40, was a good musician and played the fiddle well. Anxious, if possible, to obtain the services of a Brigade Major who could accompany him on the violoncello, he went to the Horse Guards to ask if the authorities knew of any one who could do so. He was at once told of Captain Hope Grant, of the 9th Lancers, who had recently published some of his own compositions for that instrument. The Brigadier and his

Brigade Major fiddled together for months in the old sailing frigate *Belle Isle* that took them to Chusan.

Except the Bible, which he knew thoroughly, he read few books. He was one of the very best and most religious men I ever knew. His religion was of the simplest kind, an implicit trust in God, whom he knew to be his helper in all he did. Honest, upright, truthful, fearless and good, he was simple minded and absolutely chivalrous in all his thoughts and deeds. Daring to a fault in all his military plans and actions, he endeared himself to every one who knew him well. To be intimate with him was to love him, and to his staff he was the most hospitable of generals, the best and the kindest of friends. He possessed the military intuition that made him a perfect commander of outposts, and he handled cavalry with great quickness and judgment. It was his own arm, and he never thoroughly understood the handling of infantry in action. Good fortune followed his footsteps, and the affair of Simree, which I describe further on, was the only occasion I knew of where that fickle wench played him false.

In all the military history of our country I do not know of a campaign that was better planned or more successfully brought to a conclusion than that which he conducted in China in 1860. Coming after the great naval disaster at the Pei-Ho Forts, and ending with the capture of Pekin, it marked a great epoch in the history of our relations with the East. It certainly did him great credit as a general.

Sir Hope's A.D.C., the Hon. Augustus Anson, was a soldier after my own heart. A man of much ability and of great common sense, but badly educated. A daring though an indifferent rider, he might have been a first class general had he stuck to the Army and not taken to politics and

Parliament instead. No better, no braver gentleman ever wore a red coat. He was a keen sportsman, and his energy and determination were boundless. He possessed the great, the rare gift of a natural aptitude for war. A general favourite, Sir Hope Grant was sincerely attached to him, and that feeling was fully returned by the A.D.C. for his general. He had much influence with Sir Hope, and more than once when he and I, putting our young heads together, thought that some particular plan should be adopted, or certain movements made, he was able to induce Sir Hope to see matters as we did. But Sir Hope was very difficult to persuade, and without Augustus Anson's backing up I should have failed entirely. It was long before I obtained any influence with him, for he seemed to regard me as too young to be wise, and most probably also thought me bumptious and self-opiniated. What struck me as very odd was, that although Sir Hope and his adjutant-general had been for very many years in India, neither of them could speak Hindostanee. Indeed, neither could say more than a few words in it. But in those days the officers in the Queen's Army had practically no inducement to study the native languages. The Indian Staff at that time was by no means what it should have been. It had in it some extremely able soldiers, men like Sir Henry Norman, Sir Peter Lumsden and others who would have risen to eminence in any army. But as a rule, the staff I came to know in the Bengal Presidency at the period I am writing about, were too old and too old-fashioned in their ideas. They were over-weighted with out-of-date regulations which smacked more of the counting-house than of camps and garrisons, and which tended to dwarf the initiative and smother the natural intelligence of the officers for whose

guidance they were intended. Many of these regulations were positively silly, and all seemed framed to control theft in high places, which was apparently assumed by those who framed them to be the instinct natural to all military officers. To administer a British Army on those lines might be possible in time of peace, but the attempt to do so when the whole native army of Bengal were in arms against us was supremely silly.

Sir Colin Campbell should have had those military regulations publicly burnt by the Provost-Marshal. As an example I may explain to my readers that to draw my monthly pay, the application had to be in triplicate, accompanied by a certificate from certain named authorities that I was alive upon the dates I claimed it for. The fact that I was certified, say by a bishop, to be alive in June, was not held to be sufficient evidence that I had been so also in the previous month of May: a separate certificate was required for that fact as well. What an amusing article might be written upon those military regulations and upon those who framed them!

I was still only a captain, but had been promised as a reward for my Crimean services that I should be promoted to the rank of major as soon as I had been six years in the army. That was, and still is, the minimum length of service required before any captain can obtain a majority. I had completed that period of service the previous month, and expected to see my name in the next *Gazette* we received from home. My great drawback at the moment was a want of Indian experience and my ignorance of the Hindostanee language. However, I knew that time and earnest work would soon correct both those shortcomings. When I reported myself to Sir Hope Grant, I could see that

he looked upon me as a mere boy, accustomed as he was from long residence in India to old lieutenants, ancient captains and fossilized staff officers. His adjutant-general was an old gentleman from the ranks who had been his adjutant for several years. Sir Hope believed him to be a first rate man ; I did not. He had many good qualities, but of staff work in the field he did not know the first principles.

CHAPTER XXIV

The Re-Conquest of Oudh, 1858-9

THE conquest of Oudh, after the final capture of Lucknow, entailed a vast amount of marching, fighting and skirmishing through its plains, and the crossing of many rivers, of which the Gogra at Fyzabad was over 1,000 yards in width. We had at times several small columns operating in different parts of the kingdom, but except during the time that Lord Clyde took part in its subjugation, the largest and in every way the most important column was that under the immediate command of Sir Hope Grant. During these marches, which extended over a period of many months, the usual routine was as follows. The first bugle went at 2 a.m.: I dressed and had a cup of tea and ate a biscuit, and was in the saddle at 2.30 a.m. I then rode slowly—with a native guide by my side—to the point I had selected the previous evening for the advanced guard to form upon. The several battalions of foot, batteries of artillery and regiments of cavalry then fell into their allotted positions in the main column along the road or track I had reconnoitred for a short distance the day before. All was usually ready for the march by 3 a.m., when we started. If not near an enemy, the bands struck up, and for the first two hours we made good play in the required direction. The sun rose in the months of March and April

about 4.30, and when the moon was at all big it gave us that clear, bright light which she only condescends to afford man in the tropics. In looking over some old home letters I find that when marching beyond the river Gogra in April, 1859, I mention that when the sun had risen above the horizon, upon more than one occasion the moon, a planet, and some great stars combined with it to brighten all objects in the surrounding landscape. My old Irish nurse, the best and most genial of very good women, who died when over eighty in my mother's house, used to tell me when a boy that I had only to "wish" for anything I desired upon seeing such an auspicious conjunction of luminaries, to be assured of having it accomplished. I always did so wish upon those rare occasions, but I cannot in any instance record the fulfilment of the wish I thought of.

Our ordinary marches were generally of ten miles only, as the sun became extremely unpleasant by 8 a.m.

The length of our daily column of march extended over several miles. Crowds of doolies for the sick and wounded, some thousands of camels carrying tents, the men's packs, their bedding, ammunition, spare horses, crowds of syces, many of them on ponies, a large hospital establishment of doctors, apothecaries and servants to look after the sick. I forget what camels the regimental officers had, but I know that I usually had five or six. The officers paid for their own camels. Then the Commissariat required a vast amount of hackeries—native carts—each drawn by two bullocks to carry provisions, and a baker's establishment, for we had fresh bread every day. In any other country where I have campaigned any such amount of impedimenta would have rendered all movements impossible. The number of our servants were preposterous; for each of my horses I had

two men, one a groom the other a grass cutter. What a chance for an enemy like that opposed to us, who lived upon the country and required no transport! If there had been a thousand of good mounted infantry under a real good leader opposed to us in Oudh at this time it would have altered the whole character of the war. We could not possibly have marched in the formation we did. We should have had to march the cavalry and artillery across country, leaving what we called the road for the native hackeries. Never did any regular army have to contend with a more unenterprising enemy than we had then. It was a bad school in that respect for young officers anxious to learn their work. The feeling that we could thus march about with impunity wherever we wished tended to make us careless in scouting and in all the precautionary measures usually taken to protect an army against surprise when on the march.

Our campaign in the Baiswarra district began in the hottest part of the hot season, when the sun's angry and aggressive heat seems not only to scorch the head, but to muddle and make chaos of the brain within it. It was very trying to every one who took part in it, but to the British Foot Soldier it was an awful experience. How my heart bled for him as I saw him trudge along, mile after mile, through dense clouds of dust over a parched and burnt-up country. What an uncomplaining fellow he is! In all my campaigning recollections he stands out as that which I am proudest of, and as the character in the great play of my soldier-career that I admire most. Those allotted more prominent parts in the drama of military life are better known to the outside world, and are consequently more talked of. But in my heart I feel that all the King's

subjects owe most to our Infantry Rank and File who for the last two centuries have marched through the Low Countries, France, Spain, and Portugal, or who shared in the trench work before Sebastopol and in the privations to which the winter of 1854-5 exposed them, or who have marched from the north to the south of India to fight our battles for us. If ever I became rich, I would erect a splendid monument to the memory of the private soldiers who in their thousands have fought round the world to make England the great Empire she is now.

Oudh is a level rich and well cultivated province. Its villages are all built of sun-burnt brick, and are consequently of an ugly khaki colour, their walls being well scored by the heavy rains they are exposed to every wet season. Their doors, and the shutters which close the openings where we should have windows, are of the roughest carpentry. But in all the native houses of these upper provinces, the royal palaces excepted, the woodwork is as if hewn with an adze rather than as if cut with a saw or smoothed by a plane. Their roofs are invariably flat, upon which, at sunset every evening, the women and children assemble in order, as their native idiom describes it, "to drink the air." There are a few tamarind and mango trees usually about these villages and detached houses, many of the latter being enclosed by high kutcha-built walls. In the mango groves—topes, as they are called in the vernacular—there is usually a good well, constructed of burnt brick, whose water is reserved for drinking purposes, whilst from others of larger size water is drawn by bullocks to irrigate the neighbouring gardens and surrounding fields. In some parts of Oudh there are cocoa-nut trees, but they are not numerous. The villages remind one much of those

to be seen all over Egypt. I was daily brought in contact with their well-to-do, as also with their poorest, inhabitants in my inquiries about roads, the depth of rivers and streams to be crossed, the whereabouts of the enemy, and the common news of the locality, etc. In dealing with every class one had never to forget that all are liars by nature and habit, and, from suspicion as to the object of your questions, they endeavour to mislead, and show much ingenuity in the construction of their untruthful answers. Some villages were loop-holed, and the large proprietors usually lived in forts with deep ditches and hidden all round by some hundred yards of close jungle.

The mass of the people are Hindoos, including the great landlords, or zameendars and talookdars, as they are locally called. The traveller in Oudh sees here and there a mosque, but the gracefully shaped Hindoo temple is ten times more numerous. Scattered throughout the province there are many very fine tanks. Most are surrounded with tall handsome trees, and at each there is usually either a Hindoo temple or a Mohammedan shrine, according to the religion of the charitable person at whose cost the tank was made. In many instances the surrounding groves are enlivened by numbers of monkeys or baboons. They chatter without ceasing as long as it is daylight, and are interesting creatures to study. Upon many occasions I have camped or bivouacked in the shelter of these groves, and have at times been highly amused and almost fascinated by their cunning but solemnly performed antics. They are so very human in many of their ways. They even steal from one another, and their females, who quarrel and jabber incessantly, seem full of feminine jealousy. Yet these monkeys never express by laughter the fun they are evi-

dently full of. It would seem to be the one characteristic that distinguishes man from all the beasts that perish.

After many a long dusty march, when camped near such a tank, I have thrown my hot, weary body into its cool water. I remember one evening, in the very hot season, Augustus Anson and I rode to one of these tanks that was near where the army had encamped. Whilst rolling about in its refreshing waters, a yellow snake put his head up over the surface close to my face and shook his tongue at me as he did so. Having, more than most men, a loathing horror and indescribable repugnance to all sorts of reptiles, and to snakes in particular, I felt almost paralyzed with a sort of terror, and struck out for the stepped side of the tank as fast as if I were pursued by a whole zoological garden full of hostile and man-devouring beasts and reptiles. My sense told me, from the shape of the snake's head, that it was harmless, as most water-snakes are, but this knowledge brought me no immediate satisfaction; it was, I think, the dread lest my body should come in contact with it that terrified me. I have never been able to get over this horror of reptiles, and still fly even from the harmless toad.

At the beginning of April, 1858, the celebrated Moulvee had collected a force of about 6,000 foot and 1,000 horse—all fanatical Mohammedans—at Baree, a village on the Seetapore road, some twenty-nine miles NNW. of Lucknow. He was an active, clever fellow, with a great reputation for sanctity, and bore us an old grudge for having placed him in irons previous to the Mutiny. This we had done because he openly preached resistance to our rule. Every day that his holiness was left unmolested he grew more important in native estimation.

Until Sir Hope could make the Oudh people realize that

he meant to take the field whenever it was thought necessary to do so, no matter how hot the weather might be, the idea would prevail amongst them that European soldiers could not march during the summer season. What hundreds of lives would have been saved could we have mounted our men on camels, donkeys, or ponies! This supposed immunity from attack brought daily reinforcements to the Moulvee's camp, until at last it was deemed necessary to teach him a lesson. With that object in view, Sir Hope Grant started from the Lucknow Cantonments on April 11, 1858. We all felt that the heat was the worst enemy we should have to encounter. It made my heart sick to see our soldiers tumble about on the march from heat apoplexy. In all those hot weather marches, and we had many of them then, our British infantry had to tramp along rough country cart-tracks from which rose dense clouds of dust that hung about and enveloped us. No breath of wind came, either to drive the dust away or to afford the soldiers any relief.

The column employed on this occasion consisted of a brigade of British foot, a battalion of Sikhs, a brigade of cavalry composed of the 7th Hussars, a squadron of the Queen's Bays, some troops of Wales' Horse, of Hodson's Horse, and a battery of horse artillery; there were also two field batteries and some heavy guns with the column. In the fight with this Moulvee, which came off during the third day's march, our loss from sword and bullet was insignificant, but the sun killed many and incapacitated a still larger number. The enemy fought with much pluck under their holy leader, but our attack, well planned and admirably carried out, was too much for them. Indeed, the whole affair in many respects resembled a successful field day.

CHARGED BY ENEMY'S CAVALRY

We had started an hour before daybreak, and, as usual, I had marched with the advanced party of the advanced guard, having some guides to show the way alongside my horse.

Just as the first gleam of day showed itself on our eastern horizon, and whilst it was still dark, I saw to my surprise, about 400 yards in front, a body of horsemen drawn up across the path we were advancing by. I galloped back to bring up the cavalry of the advanced guard, thinking the enemy would bolt, as they usually did upon the approach of the British dragoon. I was jogging forward at a trot with this cavalry detachment when, to my intense astonishment, the enemy came on at a good pace and charged us. Our two horse artillery guns with the advanced guard had just time to unlimber, load, and meet them with a round of canister. The enemy came upon us so quickly and so pluckily that I was obliged to draw my sword, an unusual necessity with a staff officer. When they had come near enough to take in the position, they swerved from our front, and went helter skelter into a squadron of Wales' Horse that had formed up on the other side of the guns. I did my best to persuade the officer commanding the squadron of the 7th to charge, but he did not think it advisable to leave the guns unprotected. I thought he was wrong, as the opportunity was good, and the moment seemed ticklish. Wales' Horse, by no means a brilliant lot in any way upon any occasion, were now in confusion, although they stood the charge and met the enemy hand to hand. I did not, however, relish standing by doing nothing when separated only by the two horse artillery guns from the *mêlée* going on within a few yards of us. The enemy, thinking it was time to be off, made

for our dhoolies, already tolerably full of sun-stricken men. As soon as we had deployed, an advance was made upon the position taken up by the enemy's infantry and guns. Their horse made several charges upon the flanks of our infantry. A squadron of the 7th Hussars charged them, both sides met at full tilt, and we lost several men. At the moment I was engaged in posting two companies of the Bengal Fusiliers to protect the flank where our baggage was being collected. The fusiliers stood well, and received them with a well delivered volley that emptied many saddles. The enemy had charged well home; indeed, one of their sowars was killed amongst our dhoolies. The whole affair was creditable to Sir Hope Grant and to his commanding officers, and I find it noted in a letter I wrote home that same day that it was the first occasion upon which I had seen the enemy face us bravely in the open. I believe it was because of the Moulvee's presence, as his followers had absolute faith in that holy man's invincibility.

Having broken up the Moulvee's force and so destroyed his claim to invincibility, Sir Hope Grant was ordered to Poorwa, a village of some importance about thirty miles south of Lucknow, to protect the Cawnpore road, then threatened by Beni Madhoo. There we were joined by the Sikh Rajah of Kuppertola in the Punjaub, and it was determined to transfer this duty to him. When he paid Sir Hope his formal visit of ceremony, a salute was fired in his honour. He was not prepared for this compliment, and his fat figure bounded off his chair when the first gun was fired, for he thought we were attacked. When the matter was explained, he was much gratified, for all native princes attach much importance to such honours.

This rajah was a nice young fellow and sincerely anxious to serve the State. He spoke and wrote English well, was very rich and much bejewelled when he paid his visit. Some months afterwards, when we were suffering much in camp from professional thieves, he quite calmly and seriously advised Sir Hope, the most humane of men, to adopt the method by which he said his father had rid his camp of these pests many years before. The father succeeded, he said, after much difficulty in catching in a trap set for the purpose one of these thieves who had followed his camp for weeks and had stolen heavily from it. He had him profusely anointed with sulphur and brimstone, and then set fire to him, every one in camp being obliged to watch the burning operation. He said, with a curious grunt of satisfaction, that they were never annoyed by thieves after that.

When the hot weather with its burning winds had set in, Sir Hope Grant found it necessary to restrict his military expeditions from Lucknow. No British infantry could march through Oudh in such heat without great loss from sunstroke and heat apoplexy. But we had a Chief Commissioner living in a very comfortable house, whose head was never exposed to the piercing sun, whilst every luxury that a great salary could provide helped to keep his quarters cool and his body in good health. But not so the British foot soldier. His life was a very hard one at this time, and this Chief Commissioner would have had Sir Hope Grant make it harder. Long service in India had taught Sir Hope to dread the power of the highly placed civilian administrator to ruin any general's reputation. But he was not a man to be induced by any such personal consideration to unduly expose his soldiers during the hot months.

The result was, frequent complaints were made to Government that Sir Hope would not undertake military expeditions which the Chief Commissioner deemed necessary. What did it matter to him if soldiers died of heat apoplexy during these marches! Somewhat sore because he had not been able to quickly restore peace in Oudh, he now strove, with unmanly ingratitude for all the general had already done for him, to throw the blame of that failure upon Sir Hope. He accused of want of energy, and even of daring, one who was the most ceaselessly energetic and enterprising man I ever served with! It was an abuse of the position he occupied. But Lord Clyde, who knew Sir Hope Grant of old, was not to be misled by this Commissioner's self-interested complaints. Staunch to his convictions regarding a well known comrade, he defended Sir Hope against the fault-finding aspersions of the civilian clique in Lucknow, who then had Lord Canning's ear. But how different it might have been had the Commander-in-Chief known little of Sir Hope Grant's character, and of his absolute indifference to all personal comfort in the performance of his military duties.

I was at this time busy in trying to provide better accommodation for our soldiers at the several military stations we had established in Oudh. The horrors of a hot season under canvas on the baked fields of that province are terrible to the soldier in a crowded tent. Nothing to do all day but fan the flies from his face, as he lies on his rough native charpoy, means a weary existence indeed. We had no books for our men, and very few newspapers came their way. Their life was horrible, and well might any man amongst them wish he were within the cool clean precincts of a home prison instead. If, my civilian friends, you knew the

miseries our men endured uncomplainingly in the hot weather of 1858 in Oudh, you would feel how much you owe and how much you ought to esteem every old soldier you meet who wears a Mutiny medal with a Lucknow clasp to it.

We young soldiers, though new to India, were fully aware of how completely the old order of things under the Indian system of government, civil and military, had broken down, and were consequently astonished to find the old civilian servants of the Company anxious to re-establish everywhere the pre-Mutiny system.

For the benefit of any military officers who may ever find themselves in the position of Lord Clyde or of Sir Hope Grant, at this juncture I would warn them against exposing British soldiers to fatiguing and protracted military operations during the hot weather in a country like Oudh. When that kingdom was won back by our soldiers in 1858, and civil authority was once more fairly re-established under the protection of their bayonets, commanding officers of British troops were often called upon by inconsiderate civilians to march their men in the hottest season of the year for the purpose of punishing some Rajah or Nawab, who would neither pay his taxes nor obey Government orders. In such cases many will always be the reasons urged for immediate compliance with such demands. Because our commanders never spared themselves nor their men during the great crisis we had recently passed through, the unthoughtful commissioner of a district was too prone to conclude that he ought never be refused the help of British troops to enforce his decrees. No dread of how fatal the sun might prove to our soldiers when employed upon this police work ever seemed to give the commissioner pause.

It is not easy for those who are unacquainted with the East to fully appreciate what the march of an Indian army, with its thousands of camp-followers, means to the inhabitants of the country traversed. Follow in the wake of such an invasion, and you will find the effect upon the districts passed through to be usually very like that caused by the march of a huge column of locusts before they can fly, as I have seen it in Cyprus. The walking locusts go forward in the direction they have fixed upon, and turning neither to the right nor to the left, eat up as they advance every green leaf in their path, and leave an absolute desert behind them. In many instances, such was very much the result of our marches through the still unsettled districts of Oudh at this period.

In some instances the friendly zameendar who had sought our help must have repented him of the evil he had thereby inflicted upon his country and its inhabitants. In many of our tramps over the plains of Oudh, I thought of the marches made further north by the armies of Alexander and of Porus, and felt how much there must still be in common between the scene before me and that looked upon by every Greek soldier who followed the Macedonian madman as he pressed forward towards the Jelum. The same glitter from bright weapons, the same tramp of men, neighing of horses, beating of drums and braying of trumpets; the similarly caparisoned elephants, the same grunting, overladen camels. In Hindostan, where native habits and customs change little with time, we are justified in assuming that twenty-one centuries earlier the men whom the Greeks met in the country of "The Five Rivers," were clothed in garments very similar to those worn by our splendid Sikh soldiers in 1858.

Alexander, however, most probably marched on a much wider front than we did, in order to embrace a larger extent of country from which, in passing, to draw supplies. His army lived entirely upon the inhabitants; ours did so only partially.

Whilst encamped at Newabgunj Bara Bunkee, at the end of May, 1858, Sir Hope continued to receive letters from the Chief Commissioner in Lucknow that would have alarmed most men. But my general had become accustomed to this cry of "wolf" from that quarter, and although they were usually marked "Immediate" and filled with stories that warned us of great rebel armies on the march to destroy us, they were for the most part merely docketed and "put away." If we had had a Commander of weak nerve and who was gullible by nature, our troops would have been harassed by frequent marches in the hottest season of the year, and our loss from the sun would certainly have been enormous. Indeed, there would have been but little left of our British infantry by the end of 1859.

Here I must once more record my regret that it never occurred to anyone at the time I now write about to make use of mounted infantry. That lesson we were to learn four years later from the War of Secession in the United States. Armies are slow to adopt new ideas, for even as late as 1870 no use whatever was made of mounted infantry by either France or Germany.

CHAPTER XXV

The Baiswarra Campaign, 1858

FROM the date of our fight at Baree until the end of the month—April, 1858—Sir Hope Grant was constantly on the march. He destroyed many strong native forts, and by starting very early each morning was enabled to finish his ten miles before the sun had become dangerously hot. But notwithstanding every precaution, we lost men daily from heat apoplexy.

We found Jung Bahadoor's troops halted on the road to Newabgunj, where it was intended we should remain for the present. This Ghoorka force numbered about 8,000 fighting men with twenty guns. But 2,000 were sick, and as he had 4,000 carts carrying supplies, and as each cart required a man to guard it, only 2,000 men were left available for the day of battle.

After some fatiguing marches we were ordered back to Lucknow, and thence to Poorwa. My own battalion now joined our column, which I was very glad of, for I knew it could always be depended upon to do whatever was required of it. The total strength of our column was 4,500 fighting men.

It was with great satisfaction that we shortly afterwards marched to Doundea-Kera, a very strong native fort on the Oudh side of the Ganges, and about thirty

miles below Cawnpore. There several of the poor fugitives, men and women, who had escaped from that city of slaughter, had been caught and murdered by the monster who owned the place. Finding it deserted, we took possession on May 10, 1858, exactly a year from the day the Mutiny began. We destroyed it, but regretted much we had not caught the miscreant Hindoo owner, to have hung him on the spot where he had murdered our countrypeople.

On May 12 we marched ten miles in a north-easterly direction to Nuggur, where I had hoped the general would halt, as the dreadfully hot weather had already begun to tell seriously upon our men. But shortly after we had pitched camp, news came that the enemy had taken up a position about six miles to the eastward of us, at a place called Simree, and the general decided he would march upon them at five o'clock that same afternoon. It was an unwise decision, for no European infantry could march in such heat, especially as the hot wind was then blowing hard, striking the face as does the blast from a furnace which is suddenly opened upon you. Sir Hope would listen to no remonstrance, so the march was ordered. A guard of 200 men with two guns and a squadron of cavalry were left with the baggage, stores, etc., etc., and it was intended we should bivouac for the night wherever we should be after we had disposed of the enemy.

Upon this occasion the infantry private was tried more than I have ever seen him tried, and our losses from heat apoplexy alone were accordingly very heavy. Our fight that followed this awful march and its events are indelibly burned into my memory.

This is the only operation Sir Hope Grant ever made

to my knowledge that I feel justified in finding fault with. It was a terrible lesson to all of us. I know that he was most anxious at the time in question to clear the district of the rebels and to make them realize that not even the hottest of hot weather could protect them from the bayonet of the British soldier. But in war you may purchase even the most desirable objects at too great a cost. In this instance he and his troops had to pay dearly in order to bring this fact home to the native mind.

Upon this occasion, May 12, 1858, tents were struck and the column of route formed about 3 p.m. A fiercely hot wind blew upon me clouds of burning dust as I turned in the required direction. I felt it burn my skin, and I had some trouble with heel and spur to make my Arab charger face it. About a mile or two from camp, I came upon a squadron of the 7th Hussars on outlying picket. Its general appearance was appalling. Two of its three officers lay helpless under trees with wet towels round their heads, and the men in an exhausted condition lay about in twos and threes under whatever shelter they could find. I had a good helmet with an unusually long turban wound round it, yet the sun seemed to gimlet a hole through it into my brain. My very hair seemed to crackle from the burning heat, and the nails of one's fingers became as if made of some brittle material that must soon break.

I formed the column along the dust-laden cart track that by courtesy and custom I styled a road when I spoke of it in Hindostanee to the guide who accompanied me. I wonder what he must have thought of it all! In what words did he describe to his friends afterwards the general

condition of the "Ghora Log" whom he saw with that outlying picquet upon the road?

Before we were fairly formed up and had started, the division had already suffered heavily in men disabled by heat apoplexy, of which many subsequently died.

Sir Hope Grant had passed all his life in the cavalry, and did not realize how much the foot soldier, laden with rifle, bayonet, accoutrements and sixty rounds of ball ammunition, suffers when marched in extreme heat. He consequently adopted a formation to advance in which in temperate zones, and when not exposed to any serious artillery fire, is a very convenient one to deploy from into line of battle. I mean a line of quarter columns at deploying intervals. But in the great heat and dust of that season of the year it was an extremely unwise formation. His mind was apparently so full of the question from a tactical point of view that having had little experience with infantry, he overlooked all other considerations. The result was a most disastrous march, during which the men in the centres of these quarter columns absolutely stifled from want of air and the dense dust they inhaled, fell out by dozens, whilst the enemy's cavalry, sweeping round our flanks, fell upon our dhoolies, already filled with soldiers in every phase of sunstroke. I regret to say the enemy's sowars killed many of them, decapitating several as they lay in an unconscious state. When at last we got at the enemy the usual process took place; we charged and took about a dozen of their guns. They seemed to know that they could no more stand against our men, than our men could stand the heat. We kept driving them before us, not calculating that the sun was already near the horizon. The cooler the day became the more we revived to our work,

and so went blundering forward, killing numbers, but forgetting that darkness was at hand. The sun went down, and the general still pressed on until want of light stopped all further advance. In that part of India it gets more or less suddenly dark without any special warning. But the usual indications of approaching night were there, though we were too busy, our minds too preoccupied, to notice them. There was no moon to be seen, and consequently we soon found ourselves in the unfortunate position of not knowing exactly where we were, and of having but a vague notion of where the several component parts of our division were to be found. No one knew who was on his right or left. To halt for the night when darkness thus suddenly overtook us was consequently our sole resource. Of food we officers had little, but the men had biscuit in their haversacks. Happy the mounted officer who had a syce to hold his horse whilst he lay down. I cannot say that the staff had much sleep, but all were worn out, and on all sides the snoring of exhausted men was to be heard. During the night the enemy managed to carry off the guns we had taken from him, so we thus lost the only trophies of the success we had achieved under the greatest difficulties that an Indian hot weather can oppose to military operations. I must confess that every one had a really bad night of it, but I feel convinced that our leader, Sir Hope, must have felt it the most from having realized that he had made a mistake, and his staff, who were sincerely attached to him, loyally felt for him accordingly.

In the course of my campaigning I have experienced some trying false alarms by night. Under all circumstances they are usually terrible affairs, never to be forgotten. For a moment they appear to rob of their senses

even men of the stoutest heart and of the calmest intellect. Yet, even then, the steadying voice of one cool man will often restore reason to those about him. But that "cool man" is not always at hand when most required. Darkness magnifies the supposed dangers which a heated brain is apt to conjure up upon any sudden "alarm" at night, and it often paralyses the reasoning power during the noise and fury which follow. For the instant, many are absolute lunatics and wholly irresponsible for what they do or say. To me it has always been literally terrifying to see brave soldiers not only thus bereft of reason, but often for the moment of all courage also. We are prone to pooh-pooh the phlegmatic man as slow and dull, but at such moments of terror we feel that God has not made him in vain.

Having a great horror of night alarms, of which I had had some previous experience, I induced Sir Hope to take up a position for himself and staff to await daybreak between the guns of a field battery that was near us when darkness set in. It is a secure place in the event of any untoward affair at night, for no one can run or ride over you. The gun-teams remained hooked to all night, so the tired drivers had a bad time until day broke the following morning.

I lay beside my chief, and was soon in the land of forgetfulness. I cannot remember at what hour it was that I was roused by a fiendish uproar as if all the devils in hell had been let loose. Every one seemed to be engaged in shouting on his own account as I awoke; the tramp of riderless horses galloping to and fro added much to the confusion; some shots were fired, and several comrades fought in deadly strife one with another, each under the belief that he was attacked by a mutineer. The officer commanding the battery between whose guns we had been

sleeping, a fat, prosy, stupid little man, was, according to the account he subsequently gave of the affair, attacked and knocked down. As he fell, it was said that seeing something suddenly rise between himself and the sky which he took for his enemy, he fired his revolver and put a bullet through the supposed mutineer. But unfortunately, it was not an enemy, but his own foot he had fired at, and it was through it the bullet went. For many years afterwards no one dared to talk in his presence of this unfortunate battle, and it was too serious a subject ever to allude to his wounded foot.

In a battalion close to us, the officer commanding cut down one of his own officers thinking he was a sepoy making for him. I do not remember what our loss in the action had been, nor how many were killed or injured in this appalling false alarm: but taking it all in all, the whole business was the most unfortunate affair I was ever engaged in. Although he never talked of it to me, I am convinced that Sir Hope felt it deeply, and was fully aware of how great, how fatal was his error in undertaking such a march in the hottest time of the day at that very dangerous period of the summer.

A senseless panic at times seizes upon even the bravest soldiers; I know not why, but it rarely spreads to the commissioned officer. He is better bred and better educated, and, accustomed to think for others, he acts less upon impulse and more upon reason than the private. Taught the habit of command and trained to lead others, he is far less liable to this sudden heart-sinking than the brave fellows who follow him.

When under the influence of panic, men for the moment are mad, and act without reason. Whilst the fit lasts,

they are capable of the most idiotic actions, and often become dead to all sense of self-respect and of discipline; in fact, they cease to behave like responsible beings. Nothing but some violent shock, as with the somnambulist, or some chance and often trifling occurrence brings them back to the grave realities of their position. This can only be fully realized by those who have witnessed a false alarm on a dark night with an army in the field, and who have felt the shock of panic which it sometimes occasions in a mass of even the bravest men suddenly roused from sleep by some untoward accident, some unusual event. The extent to which stalwart soldiers may become a terrified mob in the twinkling of an eye is amazing. The surrounding darkness, and the suddenness with which they are awakened, the shouts and still worse, the clang of arms, all add to their causeless fright. Men so bewildered often bayonet one another; I have known even officers to cut down their comrades in the first burst of wild alarm, and when once any such sort of surprise degenerates into fighting, a regular stampede often follows.

The man of any rank who on such an occasion keeps his head and at once takes in the position is for the moment invaluable; he is a true king of men. In the midst of deafening noise and turmoil, if he be cool, his coolness soon reduces the high temperature of those around him, for as panic is infectious, so is stolid, angered coolness also. See such a man spring nobly to the front. Although perhaps not the senior officer on the spot, all instinctively recognize and obey him as their leader when in tones of angry authority he shouts his orders in a way that commands instant obedience. He soon brings all those near him to their rational senses; and as widening circles extend

round the spot where a stone falls into the pool, so reason, with collected courage spreads round him in a rapidly widening circumference. Personal danger, great though it may be, is at once forgotten by all near him, for his overpowering individuality is soon felt and quickly leavens the perturbed mass, until reasoned quiet reigns supreme once more. The men who had been dazed with, they knew not what, are forthwith sobered into normal sanity: their frenzied fear vanishes, and under the steadying influence of this one officer's example they are once more a daring, defiant Rank and File, as with fierce demonlike recklessness they turn upon their enemy, heedless alike of danger and of all consequences. The first act in such a drama comes back in after years as a nightmare to be remembered with horror. But with the remembrance of its second phase comes the redeeming recollection of noble deeds, and of heroes to whom danger with all its usually terrible accompaniments seemed to have been an ordinary occurrence, a positive enjoyment. It is the indescribable influence of a born leader maddened for the moment with the exultation that some feel during the presence of extreme danger, which converts dismayed confusion into order, and begets triumph. When such a man appears amidst a panic-stricken crowd, even the faint in spirit take new strength. Their brief, though appalling heart-sinking vanishes as with the stroke of a wizard's wand, and they press forward with that shout which with friend and foe is known to mean victory. Men who thus rapidly experience such opposite sensations live for the moment as it were in another world. The dazed skulker is often converted in an instant into the hero so recklessly brave that it is impossible to pronounce whether he be human or divine, mere soldier or inspired devil. Those

who have had to fight for their lives in the confusion of a storming party or in the noise and din of a cavalry *mêlée*, know what all this means. They understand its delights and exultation, and remember its disappointments and the crushing reaction which often follows. Until men have had such experience they cannot know how often glory is closely allied to shame, and how nearly related the noble feeling of self-sacrifice may be to the frenzied brutality of the savage.

Most surely it is only the man that has often fought side by side with the British soldier who knows what a daring and self-sacrificing fellow, and what a magnificent fighter he is when well led. But he must be well led, and as a general rule I believe that leader must be a British gentleman.

At daybreak next morning all the staff were busy collecting our scattered Division, the enemy having entirely disappeared. During the confusion of the night, however, they had repossessed themselves of all the guns they had lost during the action! From Simree we carried away no trophy, but it taught us a lesson which none ever forgot.

Soon afterwards, on June 13, 1858, Sir Hope Grant had a most successful engagement at a place north of the Goomtee named Newabgunj Bara Bunkee, and nearly eighteen miles due east from Lucknow. There we inflicted heavy loss, both in guns and in men, upon the enemy. Upon that occasion we struck camp at Chinut in the evening before it was dark, and left our tents and all baggage under the protection of a guard 1,200 strong. The men slept until about 10 p.m., and fell in at 11 p.m. to begin their march of twelve miles. Newabgunj Bara Bunkee had lately been

the rallying point for all the Oudh rebels, and our latest information led us to believe that their fighting force collected there numbered about 15,000, most of whom were plucky zameendary men, who had with them a large number of guns. All told, our column only numbered 3,500 fighting men, but we always went into action quite certain we should win, and I presume that one of the reasons we did so was that the intelligent men amongst the enemy also felt we should. They were consequently half beaten by the time we had opened fire upon them. It was a very dark night, and the last six miles were across the open, as we had quitted the usual road.

We had a small cavalry charge during the day, when Captain Charles Frazer, in command of his squadron of the 7th Hussars, got right in amongst some of the enemy's horse and foot. I had charged with it to see what the thing was like. But the dust raised was so great that all I really saw when in the thick of the *mêlée* was the flashing of tulwars and of sabres. Frazer was given the Victoria Cross for this charge, and deserved it, for he was a daring and brilliant cavalry leader.

Augustus Anson, V.C., was riding a big flea-bitten greyish Gulf Arab that had belonged to his uncle General Anson, who died when Commander-in-Chief at the beginning of the Mutiny. Augustus, an indifferent horseman and a bad swordsman, never lost a chance of taking part in any cavalry charge that "was going" in his neighbourhood. So of course he also charged with Frazer, and joined in this *mêlée* to his heart's content. When I saw him after the charge, his flea-bitten grey was bleeding from many a sabre cut. During the course of the Mutiny he had had a large number of hand-to-hand encounters with individual Sowars, in which he had generally killed his man. I can

see him in action in my mind's eye now, with his mouth firmly closed and determination marked on every feature of his face. He was in every sense a soldier, absolutely indifferent to danger; he revelled in those hand-to-hand encounters. His family should revere his memory, for he was a relative to be remembered: I know that I am proud to have been his friend.

During this action I had a great deal of galloping about, and during one of my goings and comings, I suddenly found myself confronted by a foot soldier of the enemy who wore a green turban, which I believe indicated that he claimed descent from the "Prophet." As I approached at a canter, he had just planted a green standard about fifty yards in front of a battery he was evidently serving with. He cried out in the most defiant Hindostanee, "Come on with your tulwar." I had only a regulation infantry sword, and I had not been trained to fight on horseback, but I could not shirk such a challenge. So drawing my sword, I put spurs to my horse and rode for him as hard as I could. Just as I reached him, I made my horse swerve in order to knock him down, and he cut at me at the same moment; but in trying to avoid my horse by a sort of jump to one side he stumbled and nearly fell, and before he could "right himself" my Sowar Orderly, who was behind me, finished him with his lance. I was not very proud of this achievement, so I kept it to myself at the time.

In one of my gallops to and fro during this action I came upon the place where the surgeon of the 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade was patching up the wounded. A young lieutenant who had been hit in the foot had just had one of his toes amputated, which the surgeon threw from him as

he finished the operation. Almost before the toe had reached the ground a big kite—of which many were then flying about—swooped down, and the young officer had the excitement of seeing his toe carried away into the air to be devoured at the kite's leisure.

After all Sir Hope Grant's actions in Oudh, it was my duty to make a sketch of the ground fought over, showing its features and all the movements made by the troops engaged. It was after this action—and we had many whose names even I now forget—that I saw the largest number of the enemy's dead whilst I was engaged in making my plan of the position that had to accompany the general's despatch to Army Headquarters. It was no easy matter to make a plan that Sir Hope could fully understand. Like many whom I have known, he found it difficult to take in the features of ground from a military sketch. I was a very fair draughtsman, and often, when I took him any such sketch, he would turn it in every direction, but I do not believe he was ever able to fully follow upon it the movements shown there which had been made by his own orders. When he was a young officer, very few were ever taught to sketch ground or to make even the simplest military survey.

By far the ablest native ruler I met in India was Maun Singh, an Oudh talookdar of great importance and wealth. About thirty years of age, and very cunning, he was careful to be always on the winning side. When he fully realized that the Mutiny was a failure, he became loyal, a policy that so incensed most of the other great Baiswarra zameendars that they besieged him in a strong fort he owned near Fyzabad. After the siege had lasted some time he applied to us for help, saying he was running short of provisions.

To help a man of such importance, who was at least a declared friend, Sir Hope moved on July 22 from Newabgunj Bara Bunkee with the force he had kept at that place since the important fight there, which I have just described.

After a week's marching in the extremely hot weather of July, 1858, we reached Fyzabad. It stands upon the right bank of the river Gogra, and used to be a large city of great importance. The news of our approach had already broken up the bulk of the enemy's forces in the neighbourhood. Some had joined the Begum beyond the river, and about 8,000 had made for Sultanpoor, on the Goomtee, about thirty-five miles due south of Fyzabad. Four miles below the latter city, on the same bank of the river, are the remains of Ajoudia, the ancient Hindoo capital of Oudh. That river swarms with alligators. I have seen at least fifty, big and little, basking together in the sun upon its mud banks. When our advanced guard of cavalry and horse artillery reached it, we found several boats laden with sepoys just pushing off for the opposite bank. A couple of our six-pounders opened fire, but did them no harm. There are some extremely old temples at the Ghat on the river, and I was shown a spot on the bank where the great Hindoo god Ram is said to have disappeared into the earth. Hooneeman, the monkey god, is worshipped here, and the numerous tamarind trees about the place are thickly inhabited by a species of large monkey, who are treated by the inhabitants with great respect. Sir Hope Grant insisted upon the lazy priests who crowded the place opening the temple where was the sacred image of this deity. They shilly-shallied until at last they opened the door, and, to the horror of the bystanders, we entered. In the middle was a block of

heavy black wood, *lignum vitæ*, I believe, which was supposed to represent the head and body of a monkey, but I could see no resemblance to any such animal in it. It was clothed in a garment of some rich stuff, and was decked with jewels and gold-mohurs. My general kicked it over, to the horror of the dirty fat priests about, who had worshipped, or pretended to worship, it since they were boys.

The next day Maun Sing paid the general a visit, accompanied by a younger brother, who was fat and jolly. Upon Sir Hope's return visit I had a good opportunity of inspecting his fort, but could discover no ruins made or other damage done to it by the enemy's fire during the siege he alleged he had sustained, in which however we had never believed.

Sir Hope Grant lost no time in collecting a sufficient number of boats to bridge the river Gogra, which is there about 500 yards wide. When good piers had been constructed upon each side, the actual space to be bridged was reduced to 470 yards. We secured seventy-five flat-bottomed native boats, of which two-thirds varied from about twenty to seventy tons in grain-carrying capacity, the remainder were smaller. Bamboo was largely used for the superstructure, and answered admirably, being both strong and light, elephants crossing it without danger or difficulty. The bridge took over five weeks in construction.

The enemy were in considerable force on the opposite or left bank, and had some heavy guns, but made poor use of them. A large sandy island had been left when the river flood went down, and to it our bridge was made under the protection of a post we established upon it. Our force only numbered between four and five thousand men, of which

some 1,000 were cavalry and a battery of horse artillery. During the night of November 26–7, 1858, Gordon's Battalion of Sikhs were ferried over above the bridge with orders to advance and take the enemy in flank when the first gun was fired in the morning. Before it was light the bridge was crowded with troops making their way to the northern bank, and as soon as day broke our guns opened fire, and Gordon's Sikhs advanced. This double attack, in front and on flank was too much for our enemy, who retired, carrying off all their guns but one. The land upon the enemy's side near the river was very deep for a couple of miles, being flooded every year in the rainy season, and we had some trouble in getting our guns over it. By the time that our cavalry and horse artillery had reached sound ground, the enemy had a considerable start of us, but Sir Hope lost no time in following them up. Our cavalry and horse artillery pursuit extended to about twenty miles, at which distance all our horses were well pumped. We took six guns, and the enemy must have felt there was no use in attempting to fight us. I rode my horse to a standstill, and when we turned towards camp I was compelled to abandon him, for I regret to say he was completely foundered. I had to get back to camp with my saddle and bridle on the limber of the horse artillery battery we had with us, and I confess that twenty miles on such a springless conveyance across a country abounding in banks of from two to three feet high, was about as fatiguing a journey as I ever made. In crossing those banks we broke several, if not most, of our spare wheels, as in descending the far side of each bank the spare wheel, being carried in a vertical position, was frequently caught by the edge of the bank as the limber dropped down the bank on the opposite side.

I had a lengthened conversation with the horse artillery gunner on the limber-box beside me. He began by trying to frighten me, a favourite amusement with a soldier when he has the opportunity of trying it on with some one whom he regards as young and inexperienced. He described the horrible accidents he had seen when Horse Artillery had been obliged to cross banks "just like this one, sir," as we bumped over one of the many that fell so plentifully in our way upon that occasion. He did it cleverly, for his imagination was decidedly vivid. When at last he suddenly discovered that I was "drawing him out," and that instead of looking horror-stricken my face wore an amused expression, he "shut up," and we talked upon other subjects during the rest of the journey.

This was the longest cavalry pursuit I ever took part in, and all ranks were very glad that our little force did not move again for some days. Indeed, the horses required a good rest after it.

We had heavy torrential rains at Fyzabad the end of July and beginning of August, 1858. They cooled the air, but rendered the country cart tracks, I must not call them roads, well-nigh impassable, and they made even the small rivers unfordable. It was not therefore until the 7th of the latter month that any detachment could be made from our force at Fyzabad to drive the enemy from Sultanpoor as ordered by Lord Clyde. That city is about forty miles due south of Fyzabad. Brigadier Horsford was sent in command of the column employed. A brave man and a charming companion, full of wit and with plenty of ability, he was not, however, a keen soldier in the field, and this species of employment in the rainy season was not much to his taste and did not accord with his habits. He liked his

creature comforts, and home service suited him better than the rough-and-tumble, temper-trying mishaps of a campaign in India. He found the enemy prepared to oppose his passage over the Sye, on the south bank of which Sultanpoor stood. That river had become wide, deep and rapid from the recent rains. Not thinking he was strong enough to force a passage, he did nothing. The gift of imagination in war's affairs had not been bestowed upon him at his baptism. His force was small and the enemy were numerous and well provided with guns. He therefore sent back to Sir Hope Grant for orders. The latter, the keenest of soldiers, whom neither heat nor rain could stop, thought he had better go there himself, and accordingly started for Sultanpoor with the movable column then at Fyzabad.

We took with us two heavy guns and four 8-inch mortars, which increased the difficulty of our march over flooded tracks into which our wheels sank often to the axle. But the elephant, that most intelligent of beasts—and most useful also when you can feed him, managed to pull and push these heavy pieces over all the worst parts. It is a pleasure to watch the cleverness with which they apply their great strength upon such occasions.

In August, 1858, Sir Hope Grant's division moved to Sultanpoor, which is on the southern bank of the river Goomtee, and about thirty-seven miles nearly due south of Fyzabad. We had some skirmishes with the enemy near the river, which is there about 200 yards wide, and runs with a swift current at that season. All the boats had been removed by the enemy, but we found a few rotten "dug-outs," which the enemy had sunk as useless and not worth the labour their destruction would entail. With these some rafts were made, and upon them we crossed, men, guns and

stores. The horses were swum over very cleverly by the men of the Punjaub Regiment, and of the large number thus crossed over we only lost two. The enemy attacked us as soon as we had formed on the other side, and of course they got the worst of it. The following morning, August 29, we advanced at the first glimmer of daylight upon the position the enemy had occupied the evening before, but all had bolted.

When in the neighbourhood of Sultanpoor I heard many stories of babies having been stolen by wolves and suckled and reared up by them. I had previously read of this in Sir William Sleeman's interesting book on Oudh, so I assume it was a well authenticated fact. If so, the legend handed down to us by the Conscript Fathers about Romulus and Remus, which many have ridiculed for twenty-six centuries, may well have been true at a time when wolves flourished in the valley of the Tiber.

CHAPTER XXVI

The Baiswarra Campaign in the Winter of 1858–9

THE Baiswarra district of Oudh may be said to lie between that part of the river Goomtee on the north, which is between Lucknow and Sultanpoor, and that part of the Ganges on the south that is between Cawnpore and Allahabad. According to the information supplied us by the civil authorities, there were about 60,000 men in arms there, exclusive of the mutinous sepoys, and there were some 300 guns of sorts distributed amongst its many forts. A very large proportion of the Bengal native army had always been recruited there. The whole district was owned and ruled by great talookdars, who resided in strong forts, from which they governed their respective districts in true feudal fashion. Amongst them, Beni Mahdo, of Roy Bareilly, Lall Mahdo, of Ametie, and Maun Sing—whom I have just mentioned—were the most powerful. The forts in which they lived were places of considerable strength, surrounded with ramparts and one or more deep and often wet ditches, outside of which again was a dense and impassable jungle. It consisted partly of bamboo, but mostly of thorny bushes, that made all passage through it extremely difficult.

These forts were all of the same character, though

differing much in size and importance. The three we took, Amethie, Rampoor-Kussia and Shankerpoor, were the largest and of greatest consequence. The space enclosed by the outer line of works in each was from 200 to 250 acres. Their trace was irregular, but in a rough way approached that of the square. In none that I saw were there any re-entering angles nor any provision made in their general outline for an effective flanking defence. Their designers apparently considered the large, high, and solidly built towers in the *enceinte*, which were well provided with guns of many calibres, would answer all purposes. Their parapets had a profile of from ten to eighteen feet thick of curiously strong clay that resisted well the fire of the only heavy guns we had with us.

Between the lines of works and for several hundred yards beyond the outer ditch was a thick and practically an impenetrable jungle of thorn bushes and bamboos. After we had taken these places we could not get through this jungle, nor even along its inner edges to sketch the works, so dense was it and so formidable were its thorns. The interior line of works was usually quadrilateral and had substantial circular bastions at each corner, and if its size was great there were others on the faces also! It generally had a considerable command over the outer works, and its guns in many places could range even well over the surrounding jungle and ground beyond it.

Every able-bodied man in each of these districts was compelled by custom to fight for his feudatory chief whenever required to do so, and I may truthfully say that England had not a friend in any part of this wide and wild Province. The defenders of these forts had no rifles, and their musketry fire was contemptible. Although they were

well furnished with good brass guns their ammunition was bad, and they did not know how to use artillery effectively. Here I had the greatest satisfaction of being once more associated with Brigadier-General Sir Edward Wetherall, whom I had known in the Crimea. He was in command of a column, and was one of the few first class men we then had in any important command in Oudh. But although a thorough soldier in every respect, well versed in the science and practice of his profession, and all round an able commander, he was not a favourite with either Lord Clyde or with General Sir William Mansfield, the chief of the staff. It was to me, however, always a pleasure to be associated with one who so thoroughly knew his work, and who could explain so clearly to others what he wanted done. Sir E. Wetherall was one of the ablest and best generals I ever served with.

We did little during the months of September and October, 1858, beyond taking and destroying some of the important forts that belonged to the landowners in the Baiswarra district. They were all of the same character, and were mostly deserted because their owners knew they were not strong enough to resist us.

On November 3, 1858, Sir Hope encamped within about six miles of Rampoor Kussia, a strong fort on the Sei River, that belonged to a Rajah of doubtful character. Lord Clyde had arranged that whilst General Wetherall attacked it on November 4 from the south, Sir Hope Grant should do so from the opposite direction. To our astonishment, however, we heard some heavy firing in its direction early on the 3rd, soon after we had encamped, and before long a kossid arrived with a letter written in Greek character. As an instance of how little the ordinary schoolboy's know-

ledge of that tongue lasts with him, I may mention that it was only with much fumbling hesitation that my staff colleagues, Major, afterwards Sir Henry, Wilmot, Captain, now General, Sir Robert Biddulph, and I were able to make out its meaning. The message was to say that, without intending it, he had come to close quarters with the enemy, and not wishing to retire from the contest to which he was thus unintentionally committed, he felt obliged to assault the place. He therefore asked Sir Hope Grant to co-operate and attack the enemy, who were already retreating up the river Sei.

Sir Hope, taking with him the cavalry and some horse artillery guns, started as soon as possible; but we were too late to do anything. In taking this strong fort Wetherall had lost seventy-eight killed and wounded, but by attacking before every bolt-hole had been closed to the enemy, as the Commander-in-Chief had planned, he had won Lord Clyde's eternal enmity. Lord Clyde was not a forgiving man towards those whom he did not class as his personal friends, and Wetherall had never been one of them. Besides this, he had a great predilection for combined movements, for which great exactitude as to time and the pace of marching were essential. This made him all the more furious with those who did not play up to the somewhat complicated plans of operations in which he delighted.

In our cavalry pursuit after Rampoor Kussia, one of the 1st Punjaub Cavalry, when rifling the body of a sepoy whom he had killed, found upon him two English miniatures. He gave them over to his commanding officer, who, dining that evening with Sir Hope Grant, mentioned the circumstance to him. Sir Hope, fond of art, expressed a wish to see them, and when subsequently shown them found they were the

likenesses of his father-in-law and mother-in-law, whose house had been looted when the Mutiny broke out.

In the combined operation against Amethie, Sir Hope Grant had been ordered to take up a position in some well selected spot about two miles to the north-east of it. Whilst the camp was being so formed, he went forward to reconnoitre the enemy's works, and was greeted with some round shot. Lord Clyde had at the same time pitched his camp about three miles to the eastward of it. Receiving a message that the Commander-in-Chief wished to see him, Sir Hope started with a squadron of native cavalry as an escort, taking me to show him the way. We found his Lordship in by no means the best of humours and inclined to find fault with every one. When he paused in his ejaculations, Sir Hope said laughingly, but perhaps with the intention of paying him off in his own coin, that he had come from the vicinity of the enemy's position straight into the Commander-in-Chief's camp without having seen an outlying picket or even a sentry until he saw the sentry over Lord Clyde's own tent.

Lord Clyde's anger was unbounded at this news; the thrust had been well planted on my general's part, for Lord Clyde specially prided himself upon having all duties, especially those of outposts, well and promptly executed by his own immediate surroundings. But here, in close proximity to the enemy, Sir Hope, the best outpost officer in his army, had penetrated to his very tent with a squadron of cavalry without having encountered a picket of any sort! It was too much for him. He sent at once for the Brigadier commanding his cavalry, and poured forth upon him the vials of his wrath in the broadest of Scotch, shaking his fist at him as if he would have killed him. This Brigadier was

not generally regarded as a Solon or a Caesar, and owed his position in the Army solely to the purchase system and not to either ability or military experience. But, we all asked, how was it that the Commander-in-Chief had not found this out before ?

During most of November and the early part of December, 1858, we were engaged in this Baiswarra district, pursuing the scattered forces into which the mutineers had then separated. We killed large numbers of them, and at last drove them, together with the Nana and the still more inhuman monster his brother Bala Rao, into the Nepaul jungles.

In pursuit of these two men, we reached Bulrampoor the middle of December, 1858. It was a small town with a fort, about fifty miles due north of Fyzabad, and only a few miles south of the pretty river Raptee. It was a well kept fort belonging to a rajah who had behaved well throughout the early period of the Mutiny, when all Oudh was against us. He was a very active man, about thirty-five years of age; he rode remarkably well, was cheery and modest. He had saved several poor British fugitives during the awful days when desponding native loyalists began to think our rule had come to an end for ever. From him we learnt that the Nana and his brother, Bala Rao, had taken possession of the old fort of Toolsepore with eight guns and a large armed following. That place was about eighteen miles to the east-north-east of us.

We had then a small column operating in the Gormkpore district under a stupid Brigadier. His movements were so slow that the force he commanded was commonly known as the "Hackery Brigade." The only British troops with him was a battalion of the Somersetshire Light Infantry

under a remarkable man, Colonel Lord Mark Kerr. He was able but flighty, and amongst other peculiarities he entertained a sovereign contempt for his Brigadier, who was a weak old Indian fossil entirely unaccustomed to the control or management of British soldiers, and absolutely unfit for any independent command on active service. The two men had no ideas in common, and their temperaments differed as much as the climate of Iceland from that of the Gold Coast. Numerous misunderstandings arose between them, until at last Lord Mark telegraphed to know if he might put his Brigadier under arrest!

Sir Hope Grant sent this Brigadier orders to take Toolsepore, but he completely failed in the attempt, as Lord Mark Kerr would give him no effective help. Sir Hope then ordered the Brigade to join him, and I was sent out some miles to meet it. When I saw the dust of its column in the distance I halted to let the advanced guard come up. The first figure I made out was a man on horseback without a hat but with a white umbrella over his head. He carried in his hand a light infantry shako, and he rode without stirrups. His horse was a good one, and he sat it like one who was no stranger to the saddle. I had often seen him during our last year's stay in the Crimea, and had there heard amusing stories about him. He was eccentric by nature, and wished the world to remark upon his eccentricities. He was a very well read man, full of talent, and had his regiment in first-rate order, though he ruled it as an absolute monarch, and was consequently often "in hot water" with the military authorities. Subsequently I came to know him well: to admire his talents, to forget his peculiarities, and to like him for the goodness of his heart. Taking it altogether, this "Hackery Brigade" on

the march was a curious sight and amused me and others intensely.

Shortly after these events Sir Hope Grant, taking his Staff with him, returned to Lucknow.

In the early months of 1859 the adjutant-general of the division, now General Sir Robert Biddulph, and the judge advocate-general, the late Colonel Sir Henry Wilmot, Bart., and I had just settled down comfortably in a good house at Lucknow, when Sir Hope Grant received an order from Lord Clyde to retake the field. I had gone to Cawnpore for the first few days' leave I had had since I left home, in order to see a young brother—now General Sir George Wolseley—who was to pass through that station on his way to join his regiment in the Punjaub. I had only time to say "How are you?" and "Good-bye" to him, and then to hurry back to catch Sir Hope before he left for Fyzabad on April 12, 1859. From Lucknow to that ancient city is about ninety miles, which distance we did in three long marches. We embarked at Fyzabad in a small craft and dropped down the river Gogra some fifteen miles to where our horses had been previously sent forward. A brisk canter took us to Amorha, where we joined the force with which Sir Hope was about to operate.

In the spring of 1859 we marched through a great variety of country between the Ganges and the Nepal Mountains. We crossed many rivers, small and big, and in many places the scenery was exceedingly beautiful. The valley of the swift running Raptee is very fine from an artistic point, and is exceedingly picturesque where it winds round an important lower spur of the mountain range that is the watershed between the great Bramapootra and the Ganges. The lower sides of these mountains are well

covered with timber, but those forests were uninhabited, being the hotbed of malarial fevers. Into them we at last drove the remnant of our mutinied sepoys. The level district to the south of these lower mountain slopes is one where Thuggee had been extremely common. Men were murdered for the sake of the few annas they were supposed to have about them. Female children were often murdered by their fathers who wished to save themselves the expense of providing them with marriage portions when they grew to women's estate. Altogether, it was a country wild in its natural characteristics and inhabited by a people that were little influenced by the humane principles that are common amongst Christians.

There were said to be in the Toolsepore neighbourhood and in the Nepaul jungles north of it about 50,000 rebels, of whom one-half were mutineers of the late Bengal army. They were close to our frontiers and in a condition of abject want, and had become a great source of anxiety to Jung Bahadoor, for being high caste Hindoos he dared not adopt coercive measures towards them. They still had a large number of guns, and the Nana and his infamous brother, Bala Rao, was with them.

Upon revisiting Bulrampoor the first week in May, 1859, Sir Hope Grant received letters from both those brothers. The younger brother, Bala Rao, wrote humbly declaring he had murdered no European, and in the Queen's proclamation it was promised that those whose hands were clean in that respect would be dealt with leniently. The Nana's letter was couched in a very different tone. He abused our East India Company, and boldly asserted they had no right to the country, nor to proclaim him an outlaw.

There was nothing for it but to cross the Nepaul frontier

and disperse this force of mutineers and the crowd of bad characters from Oudh who had joined them. We were engaged in this unpleasant work for about a week. It was a curious sensation finding oneself opposed to men dressed in scarlet coatees. In some places we had to leave our horses and clamber up the hillsides as best we could. We found several women and children in the last phase of starvation, and also the bodies of others who had evidently died of want. Sir Hope Grant, with that kindness of heart and Christian spirit that distinguished him, did what he could to help these poor creatures, a line of conduct that greatly astonished those whose lives he saved.

On May 21 we had some considerable skirmishing up the sides of these hills under a dropping, badly-aimed fire from our red-coated enemy. We occasionally came to fairly close quarters with them, but their ammunition had not been improved by the damp jungle climate, and beyond wounding Sir Hope's aide-de-camp, whose life was not deemed of much value by any of us, they hurt very few of our party.

Two days afterwards, on May 23, 1859, we had our last skirmish with the mutineers of the Indian army, and I think I may note that date as the end of the great mutiny that had for a time so seriously shaken our power in Asia.

Very shortly after these events, I returned with Sir Hope Grant to Lucknow and resumed my ordinary staff duties there.

And so ended the mutiny of the Bengal Army. It abounded in examples of British heroism, of which our race has every reason to be proud.

It was a period of storm and stress, of horrors and of glory. Its history abounds in military events of

transcendent national importance, and in brilliant instances of individual prowess. Surely, a great fighting reputation is a most valuable item when we estimate the strength of any State. The self-sacrifice in the cause of country and in the maintenance of our wide Empire which fills the history of the Mutiny, should be learnt by every British schoolboy. Without doubt, the splendid daring and heroism of our countrymen of every class throughout that awful period will never be forgotten by the natives of India. In a land where reading is a rare accomplishment, and where books are few, such stories are more carefully handed down from father to son than in the noise and busy turmoil of European civilization. But even during profound peace it is essential that the millions of our fellow subjects in India should always have before their eyes an army of British soldiers as the outward evidence of Britain's strength. It will not suffice to tell them we are strong in Europe; all classes must see for themselves our strength in India if we mean them at all times to fully realize our power.

Putting upon one side all consideration of humanity—for it did not enter into his religion—the line of conduct adopted by the Nana throughout the Mutiny was the extreme of folly. Had he been really clever he would never have allowed the atrocities perpetrated at Cawnpore to have been committed. The wise rebel ruler would have released the British officer upon parole not to serve in India for say two or three years, and he would have shielded the helpless women and children who fell into his hands from all harm and insult. He might either have sent them down the river to Benares under a strong guard, or have kept them safe until he could have released them for a heavy ransom. Had he even killed the officers but spared the women and

children, how much better would have been his position! That dreadful House of Blood and the Well by its door haunted every one who had seen it soon after the massacre. All the English troops employed in the two reliefs of Lucknow and in its subsequent capture had seen it when passing through Cawnpore into Oudh, and it was the remembrance of it that kept so long alive their craving for vengeance.

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